Pipes AND TOBACCOS

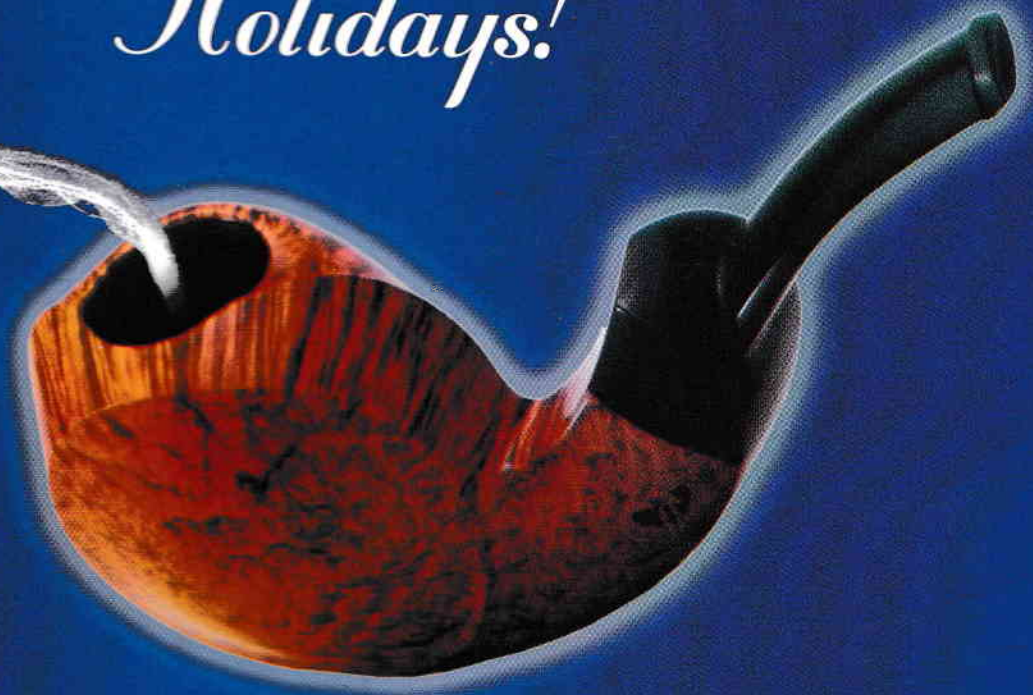
Winter 2005

Michael Butera: Pipes, Cigars and Tobacco

Happy Holidays!

The Return of Larry Roush

Dunhill Shop in Miniature



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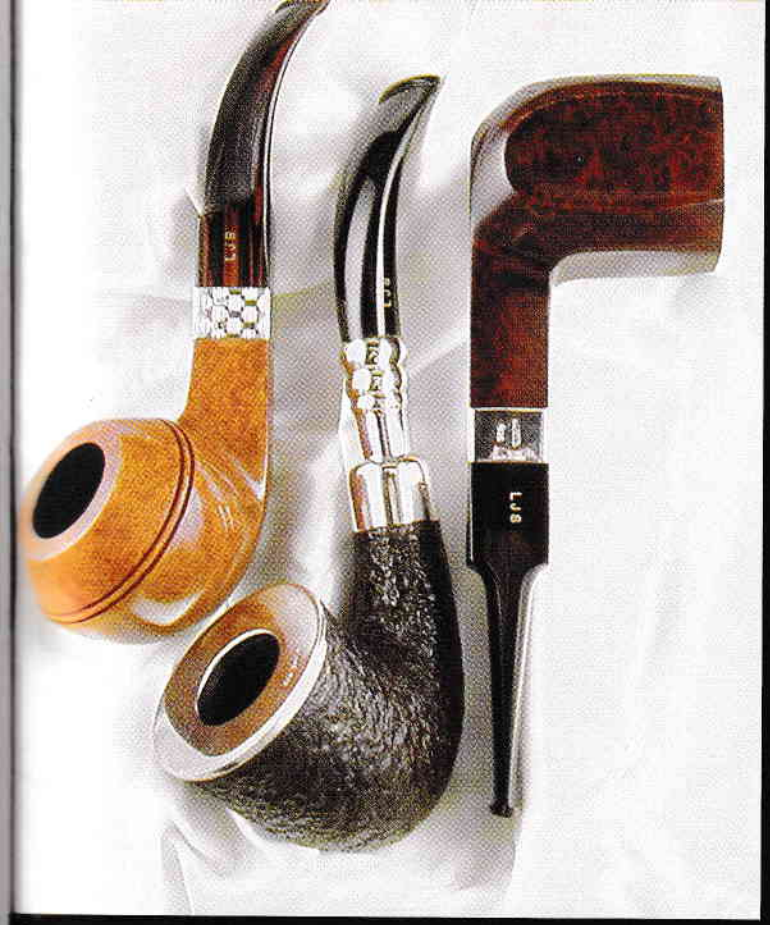

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Pipes AND TOBACCOS

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12 **Results of the Butz-Choquin and *P&T* Pipe Carving Contest**
More than 80 amateur and professional pipe carvers entered this year's pipemaking contest. Judging all of the intriguing pipe designs proved difficult; however, Rolando Negoita's interesting design won. Check out Negoita's pipe as well as pipes from the nine runners-up and some of the other competitors.

18 **Pipemaking 101. The Syllabus**
Looking to learn how to make a pipe? Ben Rapaport examines the extremely rare "how-to" manuals that have been published in the past 150 years. Unless you're lucky, wealthy, or both, you're more likely to learn by trial and error.

24 **Meticulous Determination**
While working in the insurance industry, Mike Butera relaxed in his free time by collecting and smoking pipes. He studied pipemaking and left the insurance industry, eventually becoming an award-winning pipemaker. He has also developed popular lines of cigars and pipe tobaccos.

30 **Dunhill Miniature Shop**
Dunhill pipe collector Craig Cobine wowed attendees at the 2004 Chicago Pipe Show with his miniature re-creation of London's original Dunhill tobacco store. Cobine discusses both his research and his method in bringing an early-20th-century tobacco shop back to life.

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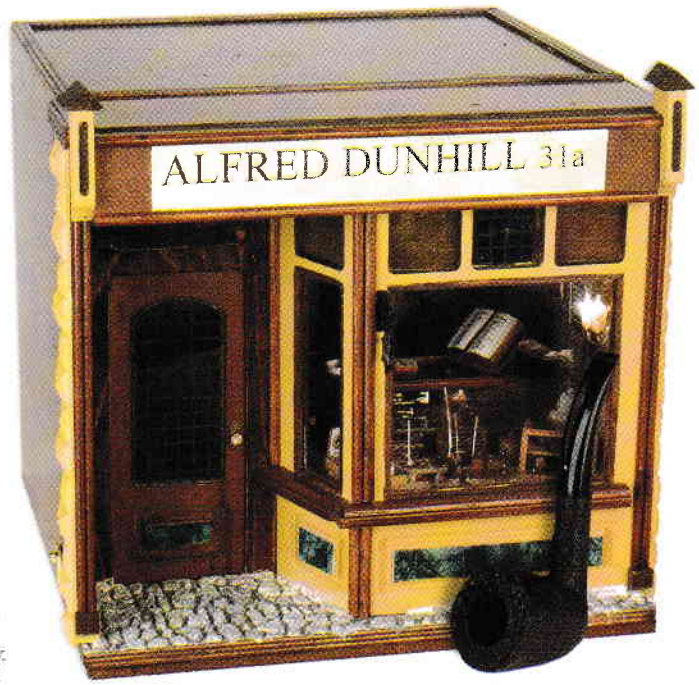

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34 **Roush's Return**
Larry Roush is once again known for making pipes with fine smoking quality, distinctive design and meticulous workmanship—a reputation he has had to build a second time after taking a hiatus from pipemaking.

40 **Containers for Commoners, Caches for Kings**
Do you know why the first vending machine was invented? Cyndi and Tad Gage have the answer in their survey of the history and evolution of early tobacco containers.

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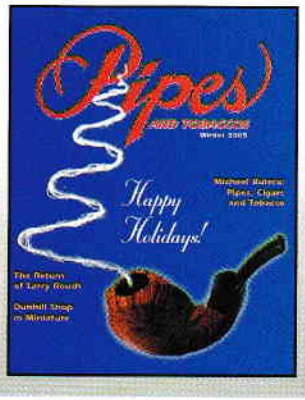

Cover: *P&T* wishes you and your family the greatest health, wealth and happiness this holiday season. *(Lars Ivarsson pipe with artwork by Lou Ann Overman.)*

Pipes AND TOBACCOS

A quarterly magazine celebrating pipes of all kinds and fine tobaccos.

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A Smoke-Deprived Vacation

Despite the fact that Walt Disney was an avid pipe smoker, Walt Disney World is not a smoke-friendly place.

My family and I spent a week there in September and it was probably the greatest vacation we've ever had. My wife and I had been promising our daughter a trip to Disney for years, but something always came up—deadlines, home repairs, family obligations. This year we finally made it. As much fun as it was, though, it is not a vacation destination that accommodates smokers.

We stayed on Disney property, at the Boardwalk resort. We wanted to immerse ourselves in the experience. Transportation to all the parks was provided, so there was no need for our driving anywhere—no dealing with the outside world at all. It was an excellent hotel, but we couldn't get a smoking room. My family didn't mind as much as I did. They still view my pipe smoking with tolerant bewilderment, as though it is something I might snap out of eventually. They think that one day I'll suddenly look at the pipe in my hand and say, "My goodness, whatever is this thing," throw it out of the window with distaste and become an editor for *Women's Wear Daily*.

The front-desk staff at the hotel seemed surprised that I would ask for such a thing as a smoking room. Of course, it *was* a surprise to them, since my wife had booked a nonsmoking room—a revelation that I noted for future private discussion with her. The desk clerk indicated that there were indeed some smoking rooms in the hotel, but that I couldn't have one (and I would swear he clenched his mouth shut to keep from blurting out, "*Nyah nyah-nyah nyah-nyah nyah*"). However, our room had a balcony, so I figured that would suffice.

There are two things I had forgotten about Florida: It's too hot to smoke outside most of the time; and it's against the law to smoke inside any structure that any human being might potentially enter, blunder past or notice peripherally from a distance. With no place else to go, I smoked on the balcony despite the heat.

The people with the balcony next to ours didn't like me. On our first night, I settled on our balcony after dinner to enjoy a pipe while watching families enjoy the pool four floors below, and the lady next door came out on her balcony, whiffed the air, glared at me and stalked back inside her room. I felt moderately guilty about that. I think most smokers are made to feel guilty these days. But that lady did her best to dispel my guilt and make me feel fine about smoking by coming outside again a few moments later, sniffing the air and calling to her companion, "*Eeww*, someone's smoking out here, I thought this was a no-smoking floor!" She hopped back into her room like a troll dodging the sunrise, slamming her door behind her, and I suddenly felt fine about smoking. I experienced no more balcony guilt for the remainder of our stay.

I didn't bother taking a pipe with me to the different parks. You can't smoke even outside while in the parks. There were smoking areas set aside in out-of-the-way places, but a smoking area is no place to enjoy a pipe. And even if permitted, I probably would not have smoked while plummeting down Splash Mountain or the Humunga Kowabunga water slide at Typhoon Lagoon. Still, the smoking areas seemed to always have plenty of people penned up, and that seemed ridiculous.

I still highly recommend Disney World for a great vacation. Sure, it's not for smokers. But it doesn't pretend to be. It's for kids. And when we watch our kids experiencing the kinds of wonder and innocent joy that they can at Disney, smoking is far from our thoughts.

Chuck

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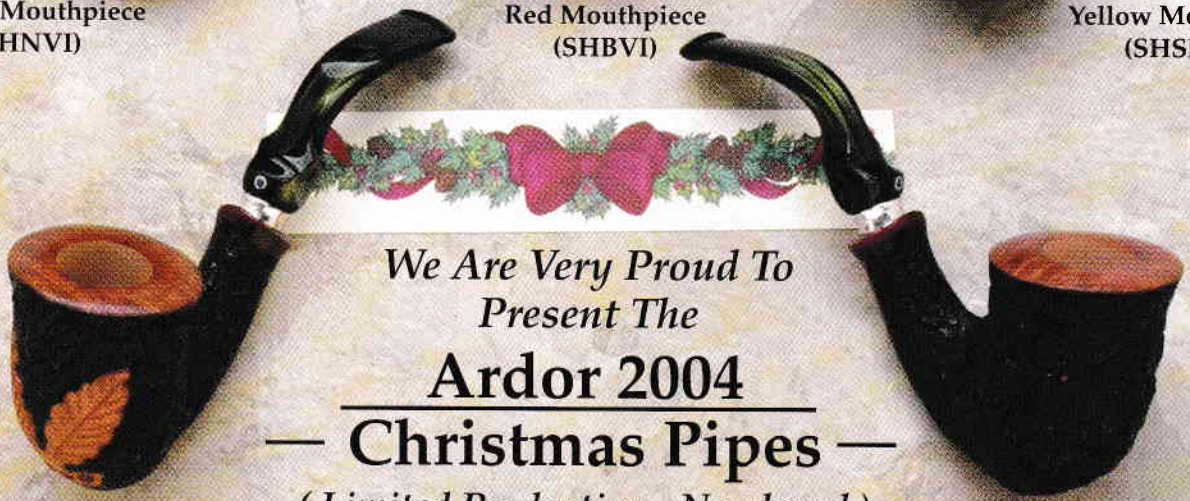

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P&T *Readers Respond*

Mea culpa

They say things usually come in threes and we sure proved it in our last issue in which we made at least three errors. We can only apologize and rectify those mistakes. In the story on California pipemaker Tony Rodriguez, we printed an incorrect e-mail address for Rob Cooper, a vendor of Tony Rodriguez pipes on eBay under the name "coopersark." The correct e-mail address is coopersark@comcast.net. *To show that we are equal opportunity lunkheads, we also printed an incorrect Web site address for Wagner Tabak-Ladeli in the story on Cornelius Mänz. The correct address is* www.wagner-tabak-laedeli.com/. *Finally, we've been informed that Ebenhart is not the only South African pipemaker as author John MacLennan asserted in his story on Ebenhart. We've been put on notice that there is at least one other professional South African pipe carver. Johan Slabbert has been making pipes for nearly five years and we recommend that you check out his Web site at* http://www.jobertpipes.co.za.

Dynamic duo

I would like to publicly thank two great pipemakers for their dedication and excellent work. I am an avid collector of pipes, briar and meerschaum. In the world of meerschaum carvers there is one carver that I feel is the grand master of master carvers, Sadik Yanik. He is not only the best carver in the world, but he also is a very kind and considerate person. Of the briar pipes in my collection, none seem to compare in the smoking qualities to my pipes made by Julius Vesz. They are truly works of art.

Also, thank you for providing me with hours of pleasure with your fantastic magazine. The writers do an excellent job and I find myself reading the back issues again and again. I wish it appeared monthly.

Mike Medsker
Cyberspace

An ode to American corncobs

I can remember trying out a corncob pipe with my boyhood friends and thinking that it was a pretty terrible smoke. I have learned over the course of 66 years that it wasn't the pipe that tasted so bad, it was the garbage tobacco that we stuffed into it.

A corncob is a pretty good pipe to cowboy around with. They smoke well when you stuff them with high-grade aromatic tobaccos. They're light to carry around and they're inexpensive. If you fell off your horse or mule with a Dunhill in your pocket and it broke, you'd cry for weeks or shoot the animal. You wouldn't feel that way about a corncob.

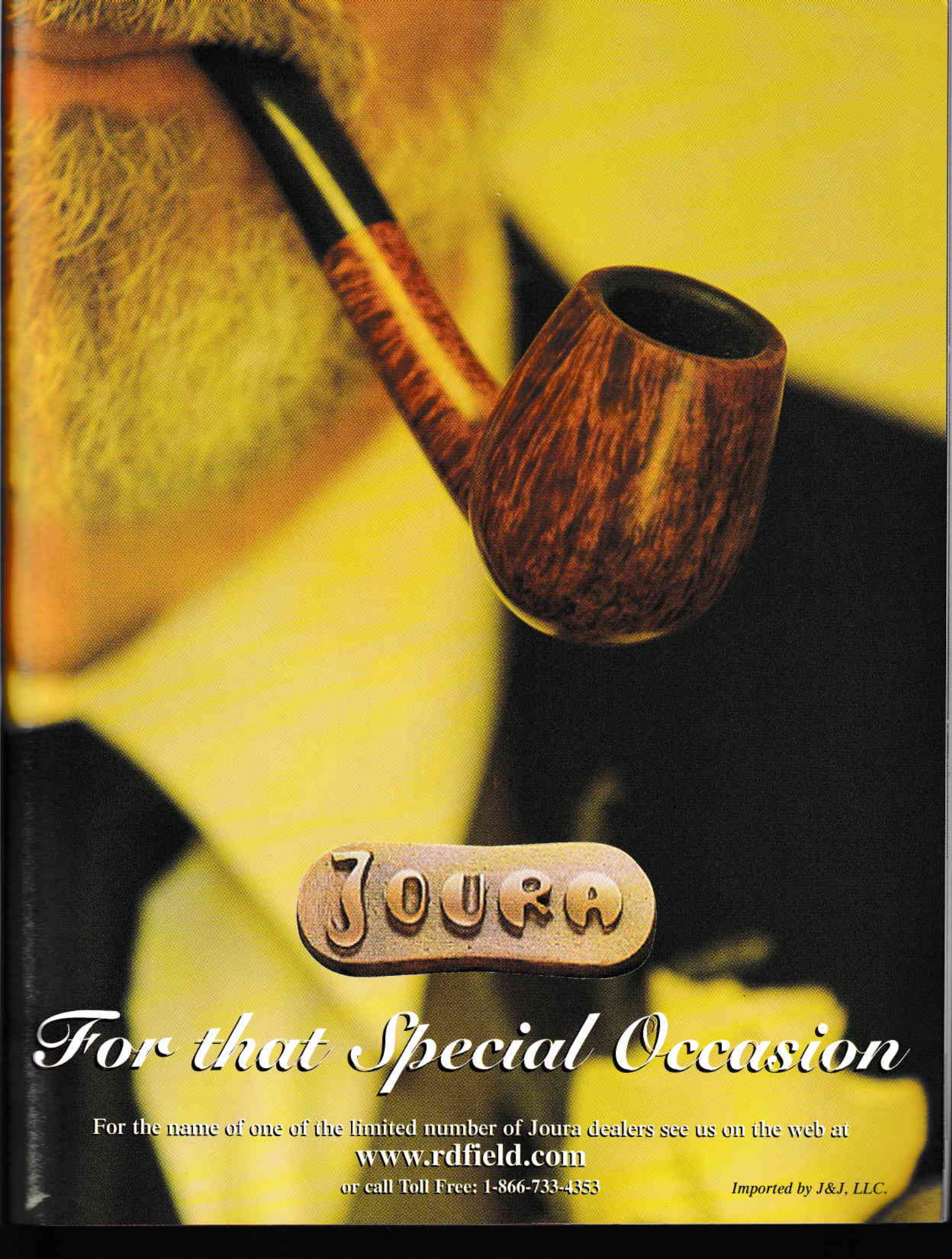
Missouri Meerschaum has been making pipes in Washington, Missouri, since 1869. It grows its corn strictly for pipe production and it follows an exact curing time to meet demanding expectations. According to my last count, Missouri Meerschaum makes 11 models of corncob pipes. Some have paper filters, which I remove because I don't like filters.

Corncob pipes break in easily and have no harsh tongue-bite. They cake really well and they will handle almost any decent aromatic tobacco. I have no favorite tobacco around the campfire but I am partial to anything that has a good aroma and that my mules like.

I have about 10 high-end pipes. I enjoy smoking them when I'm seated in my big, brown chair. I have four corncobs that I enjoy equally well when I'm sitting by a campfire that's 8,000 feet high and I'm sipping on coffee. I do not worry about damaging them because they cost between $3 and $10 and I know that I can buy another without my wife complaining.

By the way, I have slipped a corncob pipe into my jeans' pocket, mounted my mule and heard that unmistakable cracking sound of the stem separating from the bowl. In this case, I didn't cry (cowboys should never cry), I ordered another from *www.corncobpipe.com/home*. Yes, we cowboys have learned to use computers too. Some of us even surf the Web better than we ride or rope.

Stan Freeman
Anza, California



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Olympian briar

I have been a great fan of *P&T* and I have every issue. Your magazine encouraged me to start carving my own pipes.

Over the years, I had difficulty in finding briar to make pipes until I discovered Kronos, a Greek briar supplier.

Approximately four weeks before the Summer Olympics in Greece, I traveled to the country as a chaperon for nine members of the youth Sunday group at Bethesda, Maryland's Pilgrim Lutheran Church. We retraced the trips St. Paul made in Greece. While the group stayed at the beach in Patras, I took a bus and an interpreter with me on a visit to Kronos.

I met Garedakis Ioannis and his father-in-law. They showed me their business and how they cut briar in the basement of their building. In the basement, there is a slightly elevated area at one end where three 18-inch saw blades cut the briar. They sit in front of the saws and place the cut briar into old, large leather buckets that are approximately three-fourths-inch thick and approximately 30-inches-by-15-inches in size. They collect the briar in the area near Greek's border with Albania in the winter. They use the debris to heat their house and also to boil the burls.

It was fascinating to see their operation, which has probably been in the family for more than 100 years. Kronos is quite willing to supply any amateur pipemaker with single bags of briar blocks. They may be contacted at Kronos, Ioannis Garedakis & Co., Str. Anrusis 12, Patras, Greece; e-mail: *ggares@otenet.G.*

John A. Long Jr. M.D.
Arlington, Virginia

Double the pleasure

Kudos on *P&T*'s latest issue. The addition of Tad Gage to "Trial By Fire" reminds me of the old Double Mint chewing gum commercial—"Double your pleasure—Double your fun."

William Childress
Cyberspace

Congratulations on finding the only way you could improve "Trial By Fire." Adding Tad Gage to the review panel is a revelation that must have been inspired by divine grace. Providing a second opinion is standard practice in the medical field, so doesn't it make sense to have a second opinion in the far more important tobacco tasting field? Kudos to William Serad, Gage, and *P&T*!

Nick Spencer
Denham Springs, Louisiana

Bust for Butz?

I bought this pipe from Pete Erbskorn, a woodcarver who lives near me. I told him of *P&T*'s Butz-Choquin pipe carving contest and that I planned to enter the pipe on his behalf. I seriously doubted that it would be considered as a pipe that could be duplicated because it is so unique, but I thought you might be interested in seeing it and you might include a picture of it in an upcoming issue.

Jim Alexander
Greenville, South Carolina

P&T: *Although the pipe is stunning, we believe that it would be impossible for Butz-Choquin to reproduce thousands of copies of it because of the time required to make such a detailed pipe. However, we did some investigating and learned that Erbskorn is a member of the Piedmont Woodcarvers Club and the National Woodcarvers Association. He carves mostly busts and caricatures. He has only started making pipes, which he considers a fun challenge. To commission an Erbskorn wood carving, contact him at PME Woodcarvings, 4 Live Oak Ct., Taylors, SC 29687; phone: 864.268.6299.*

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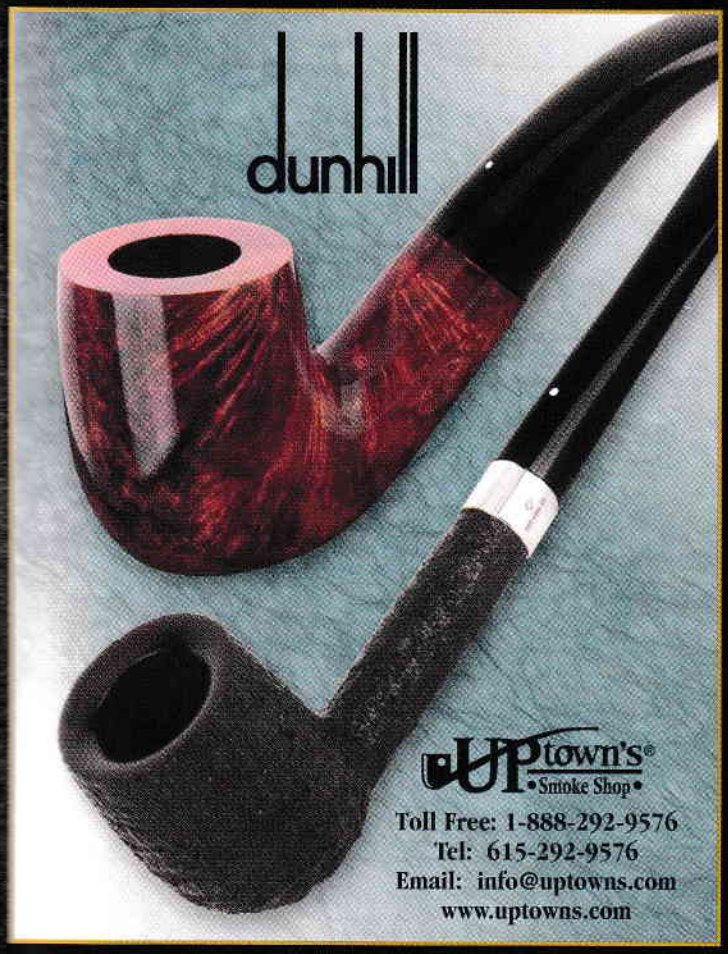

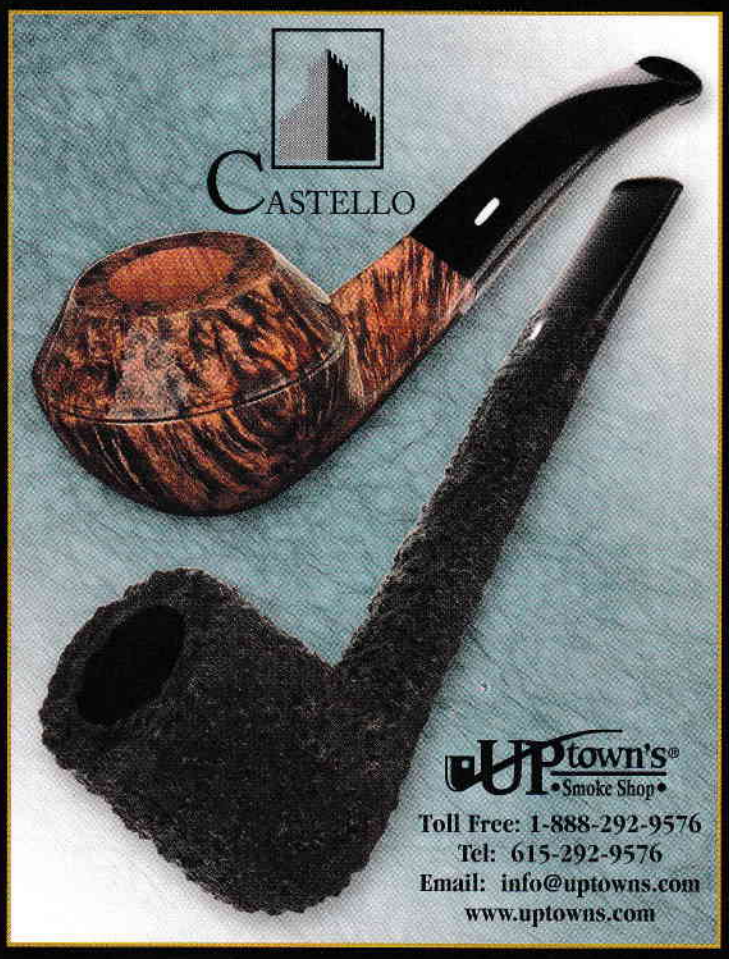

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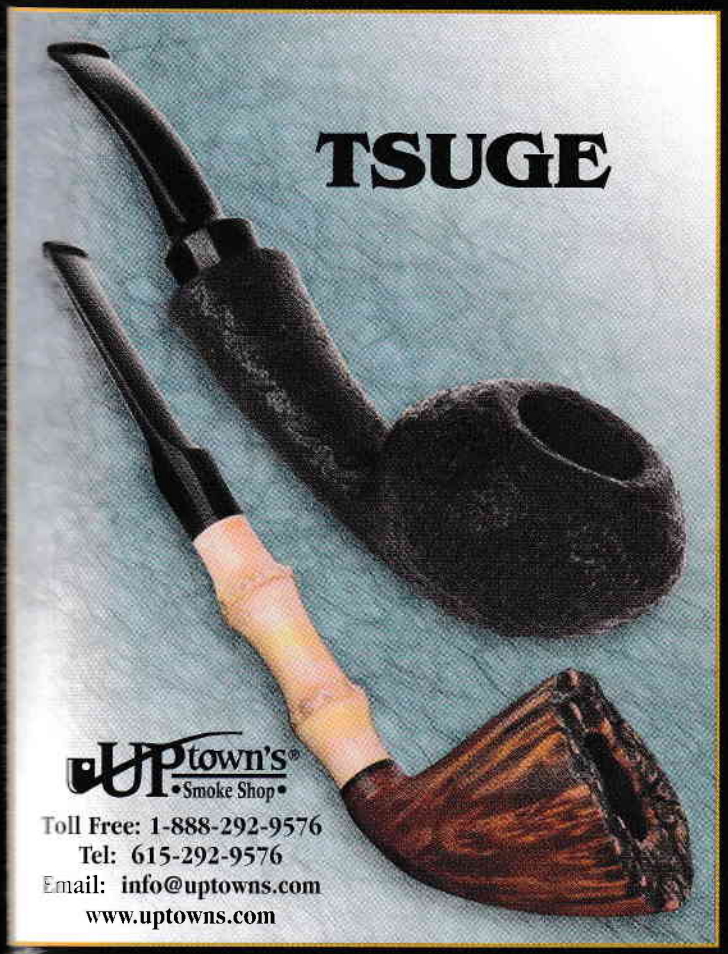

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CURTIS DRAPER *Washington (202) 638-2555* **FLORIDA:** BENNINGTON TOB *Boca Raton (888) 574-5404* • HARBOR CIG *Destin (850) 650-3111* • STOGIES *Longwood (407) 767-1220* • SMOKE SHOP *Ocala (702) 940-6551* • BENNINGTON TOB *Sarasota (941) 388-1562* **GEORGIA:** ROYAL CIGAR *Atlanta (404) 329-0088* • TOBACCO SUPERMARKET *Atlanta (800) 722-7692* • OLD SOUTH TOB *Macon (478) 477-5426* • TASTE OF CUBA *Marietta (770) 422-0142* • CIGAR GUY *St. Simons Island (912) 634-9944* **IOWA:** DAVID'S *Des Moines (515) 278-8701* **IDAHO:** HANNIFINS *Boise (208) 342-7473* • STURMAN'S *Boise (208) 338-3225* **ILLINOIS:** ARLINGTON *Arlington Heights (847) 255-2263* • IWAN RIES *Chicago (800) 621-1457* • TOBACCO ROOM *Chicago (773) 545-6309* • UP DOWN *Chicago (312) 337-8025* • MOORE'S TOB *Danville (217) 431-3271* • LAGRANGE PREMIUM TOB *LaGrange (708) 579-5101* • SMOKERS HAVEN *Orland Park (708) 633-8331* • HABANA CIGAR *Schaumburg (847) 517-4444* • CIGAR KING *Skokie (847) 675-2447* **INDIANA:** HARDWICKES *Indianapolis (317) 257-5915* • CARMACK'S *Noblesville (317) 773-3770* **JAPAN:** TSUGE PIPE CO. *Tokyo (0181) 33-845-1221* **KANSAS:** CIGAR & TABAC *Overland Park (913) 381-5597* • DIEBEL'S *Overland Park (913) 663-0123* • BRIGHT LEAF *Wichita (316) 712-0242* **KENTUCKY:** BOWLING GREEN *Bowling Green (270) 843-9439* • KREMER'S *Louisville (502) 584-3332* **LOUISIANA:** MAYAN IMPORT *New Orleans (504) 269-9000* • M.A.'S SMOKE HOUSE *Shreveport (318) 861-3138* **MASSACHUSETTS:** L.J. PERETTI *Boston (617) 482-0218* • BROOKLINE *Brookline (617) 566-9634* • WATCH CITY *Framingham (508) 628-0112* • AURORA BOREALIS *Northampton (413) 585-9533* • CHIC & CHEAP *Provincetown (508) 487-1004* • RED LION *Salem (978) 745-2050* **MARYLAND:** FADERS & BENTON *Annapolis (410) 266-6955* • FADER'S *Baltimore (410) 828-4555* • BETHESDA TOB *Bethesda (301) 907-7990* • DAVIDUS *Ellicott City (410) 480-4810* • DAVIDUS *Frederick (888) 422-2621* • DAVIDUS *Gaithersburg (301) 963-8400* • ADAM LEAF & BEAN *Lutherville (410) 339-7072* • DAVIDUS *Olney (301) 260-0786* • FADER'S *Owings Mills (410) 828-4555* • DAVIDUS *Potomac (301) 983-6646* • FADER'S *Towson (410) 828-4555* • TINDER BOX *Waldorf (301) 374-9100* **MICHIGAN:** MAISON EDWARDS *Ann Arbor (734) 662-4145* • SMOKY'S *Auburn Hills (248) 373-7174* • CHURCHILL'S *Birmingham (248) 647-4555* • SMOKY'S *Bloomfield Hills (248) 334-3720* • HOSTETTER'S *Grand Haven (616) 842-3920* • SMOKY'S *Livonia (734) 513-2622* • SMOKY'S *Richmond (586) 727-5834* • HUMIDOR ONE *Southfield (248) 356-4600* • TROY TOB *Troy (248) 528-8018* **MINNESOTA:** JONATHON FIELDING *St. Paul (651) 489-7504* **MISSOURI:** NOSTALGIA SHOP *Columbia (573) 874-1950* • DIEBEL'S *Kansas City (816) 931-2988* • OUTLAW CIG *Kansas City (816) 505-2442* • WELCOME SMOKERS *Maryland Heights (314) 739-9536* • JUST FOR HIM *Springfield (417) 886-8380* **MONTANA:** STOGIES *Billings (406) 248-6879* **NORTH CAROLINA:** BRUCE'S *Asheville (828) 253-8822* • TOB OF CARY *Cary (919) 469-4262* • McCRANIE'S *Charlotte (704) 523-8554* • TINDER BOX *Charlotte (704) 366-5164* • TINDER BOX *Durham (919) 806-5533* • ANSTEAD TOB *Fayetteville (910) 864-5705* • PIPE AND PINT *Greensboro (336) 218-8610* • SIR TOM'S *Hendersonville (828) 697-7753* • TOB OF RALEIGH *Raleigh (919) 954-0020* • DAVIS AND SON *Wilmington (910) 791-9668* • PIPES, ETC *Winston-Salem (336) 723-1269* **NEBRASKA:** TED'S TOB *Lincoln (402) 484-5572* • S.G. ROI *Omaha (402) 341-9264* **NEW HAMPSHIRE:** TOBACCO HAVEN *Brookline (603) 673-1178* **NEW MEXICO:** SANTA FE *Santa Fe (505) 982-1044* • SANTA FE *Santa Fe (505) 995-1142* **NEVADA:** CARSON CIG *Carson City (775) 884-4402* **NEW YORK:** HABANA PREMIUM *Albany (518) 690-2222* • VILLAGE TOB *Babylon (631) 661-8406* • A & D TOB *East Northport (631) 499-2350* • MARX BROTHERS *Huntington (631) 427-2624* • TOBACCO CORNER *Huntington Station (631) 425-7665* • BARCLAY-REX *New York (212) 692-9680* • BARCLAY-REX *New York (212) 888-1015* • BARCLAY-REX *New York (212) 385-4632* • DAVIDOFF *New York (212) 751-9060* • OAKDALE *Oakdale (631) 218-0580* • CUPO' JOES *Queensbury (518) 615-0107* • UNITED SMOKE *Rhinebeck (845) 876-7185* **OHIO:** WHARF *Beavercreek (937) 426-0633* • CUBITA CIG *Broadview Heights (440) 746-7005* • COUSIN'S CIG *Cleveland (216) 781-9390* • BARCLAY TOB *Columbus (614) 764-0300* • BURNING LEAF *Columbus (614) 443-5323* • PIPES & PLEASURES *Columbus (614) 235-6422* • PORT ROYAL *Columbus (614) 280-0886* • SMOKER'S HAVEN *Columbus (614) 299-2442* • SMOKER'S HAVEN *Columbus (614) 538-9534* • TINDER BOX *Columbus (614) 276-2904* • TINDER BOX *Columbus (614) 475-7872* • TINDER BOX *Dublin (614) 761-3120* • HUMIDOR *Newark (740) 366-1881* **OKLAHOMA:** CLIFF'S PIPES *Norman (405) 329-9354* • TOB EXCHANGE *Oklahoma City (405) 843-1688* • TOB ROOM *Oklahoma City (405) 843-1010* • FOGUE & BATES *Tulsa (918) 488-0818* **OREGON:** RICH'S CIGAR *Portland (503) 228-1700* **PENNSYLVANIA:** MARS CIGARS *Elysburg (570) 672-1246* • J.M. CIGARS *Exton (610) 363-8063* • COUNTY SEAT *Fairless Hills (215) 269-6900* • TINDER BOX *Harrisburg (717) 232-7166* • TASTE OF CUBA *New Hope (215) 862-1122* • BLACK CAT *Philadelphia (215) 563-9850* • HOLT'S *Philadelphia (215) 732-8500* • EL FUMADOR *Sewickley (412) 741-1300* • TOB VILLAGE *Whitehall (610) 434-1555* • EL HUMIDOR *Wilkes-Barre (570) 822-3544* **RHODE ISLAND:** UP IN SMOKE *Westerly (401) 348-0534* **SOUTH CAROLINA:** TINDER BOX *Charleston (843) 853-3720* • BODA PIPES *Greenville (864) 242-1545* • TOWNE CENTRE *Mt. Pleasant (843) 216-0373* • LAUDISI *N. Myrtle Beach (888) 366-0345* • BUCHANANS *Pawley's Island (843) 235-6990* **TENNESSEE:** GATLIN-BURLIER *Gatlinburg (865) 436-4412* • KNOXVILLE CIG *Knoxville (865) 673-8556* • SMOKYS *Knoxville (865) 693-8371* • TOB CORNER *Memphis (901) 682-3326* • 310 PIPE & TOB *Murfreesboro (615) 893-3100* • ARCADE *Nashville (615) 726-8031* • ELLISTON PLACE *Nashville (615) 320-7624* • TOB ROAD *Nashville (615) 331-7139* • UPTOWN'S *Nashville (615) 292-6866* **TEXAS:** ARLINGTON CIG *Arlington (817) 226-7441* • B R TOBACCO *Austin (800) 962-5003* • HEROES & LEGACIES *Austin (512) 343-6600* • OLD GRAPEVINE *Grapevine (817) 424-2326* • CROFT'S *Houston (713) 850-8091* • BRIAR SHOPPE *Houston (713) 529-6347* • CIGAR VAULT *Houston (713) 840-7612* • UP IN SMOKE *Irving (972) 536-0115* • HEMINGWAY *Midland (915) 570-5333* • EDWARD'S *Richardson (972) 744-0010* • DON'S HUMIDOR *Waco (254) 772-3919* • SMOKE RING *Webster (281) 332-9871* **VIRGINIA:** CIGAR VAULT *Arlington (703) 276-9256* • TOBACCONIST & GIFT *Charlottesville (434) 973-9065* • JOHN B. HAYES *Fairfax (703) 385-3033* • LEESBURG EMPORIUM *Leesburg (703) 777-5557* • MR. JOHN'S *Lynchburg (434) 847-3050* • HAVANA CONNECTIONS *Richmond (804) 673-6523* • OLD VIRGINIA *Woodbridge (703) 492-2260* **VERMONT:** HOWIE'S HUMIDOR *S. Burlington (802) 864-7840* **WASHINGTON:** ARCADE *Seattle (206) 587-0159* • TOB WORLD *Spokane (509) 326-4665* • LITTLE BROWN SMOKE SHACK *Yakima (509) 457-6404* **WISCONSIN:** JACK'S TOB *Brookfield (262) 783-7473* • LAKE COUNTRY *Delafield (262) 646-7530* • UHLES TOB *Milwaukee (414) 273-6665*

Mixture No. 7 - For Butera

BUTERA

Results of the Butz-Choquin and *P&T* Pipe Carving Contest

When we first announced this year's pipe carving contest, which is co-sponsored by the legendary French pipe company Butz-Choquin, we had no idea how many entries we would receive. Response was overwhelming. More than 80 amateur and professional pipe carvers from around the world submitted entries. All of the entries exhibited beauty, craftsmanship and a lot of personal investment of time.

One of the most rewarding aspects of holding a pipe carving contest is that often it is the final push to convince would-be carvers to take the plunge and make their first pipes. We hope that our rookie carvers will keep at it, hone their skills, and enter future pipe carving contests. Many of the amateur contestants submitted pipes that were so well made that it was difficult to identify them as being made by anyone other than a professional pipemaker.

With so many wonderful entries, judging the pipes proved to be a difficult task. *P&T* staff members judged all the pipes and selected the top 10 entries through several rounds of arduous judging. Fist-fights and pistols at 10 paces often settled disputes between judges as they considered each pipe's shape and asked questions such as, "Does the pipe appear to reflect good smoking qualities? Is the design creative and workable? Will the shape appeal to smokers? Will the shape work with smooth, sandblast and rusticated finishes?" Although many of the pipes exhibited beautiful grain, grain was not a criterion for judging the pipes.

After *P&T* winnowed the field to 10 pipes, they were then sent to Butz-Choquin in Saint-Claude, France, for final judging. BC's selection of the winner of the contest was announced at the Oct. 1 dinner kicking off the CORPS pipe show in Richmond, Virginia.

After careful consideration, BC selected Rolando Negoita as the winner of this year's contest. As the winner, Negoita received $1,500 worth of top plateau briar from BC. The company will also reproduce Negoita's pipe for distribution and sale on five continents, with his name stamped on each pipe and a brochure in each special presentation box describing the origin of the pipe and giving information on the winning designer. In addition, Negoita will be flown to Saint-Claude where he will be inducted into the prestigious Confrerie des Maitres Pipiers de Saint-Claude (Brotherhood of Master Pipemakers of Saint-Claude).

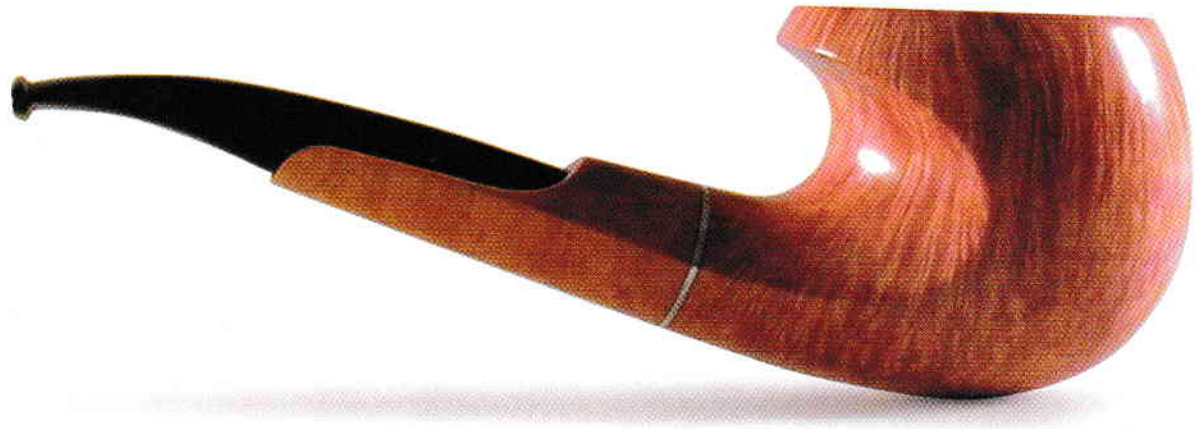
P&T also extends its congratulations to the nine runners-up who had their pipes selected for final judging in France. Although we are sure that they are disappointed that their pipes weren't selected as the winner, they all have the right to be proud of their entries. The nine runners-up are Dana Busa, Jack Howell, Tyler Lane, Gregor Lobnik, Will Purdy, Jim Rainey, Joseph Skoda, Steve Stephenson and Paul Tatum.

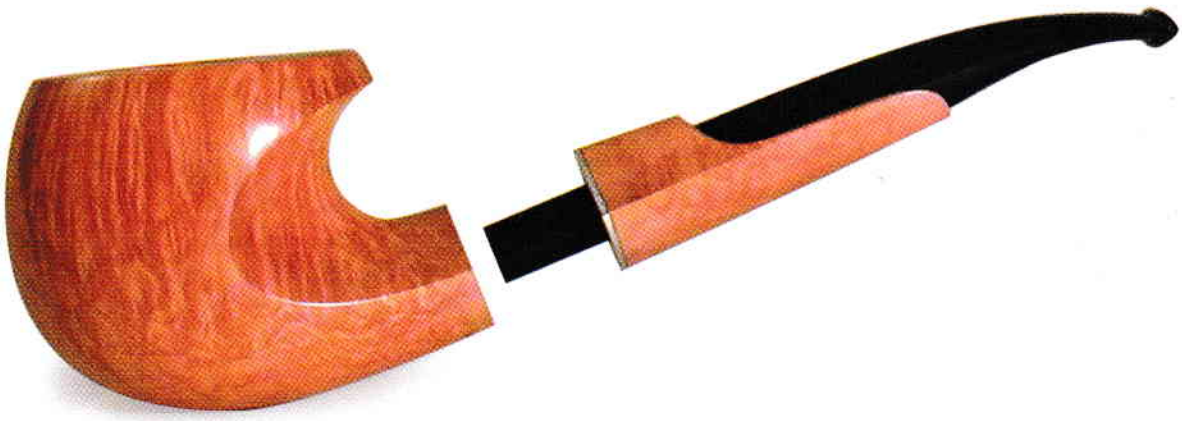
Runners-up received beautiful prizes from *P&T* advertisers. Butera Pipe Co. contributed a Butera meerschaum pipe; Cristom donated a Calabresi 7-day pipe rack and tobacco humidor; F&K Cigar Co. gave a Bentley pipe; Felipe Gregorio provided a Tsuge pipe; James Norman donated a Caminetto pipe; Monjure International presented a Rinaldo pipe; Music City Marketing contributed a Butz-Choquin pipe; R.D. Field donated a Radice pipe; and XYZ Direct presented a pipe from Chacom.

We would like to congratulate all the carvers who entered our contest. It was inspiring to see the creations of so many innovative people. We hope the experience was as joyful and exciting for those who entered as it was for us to see their creations. *P&T*

The Winning Pipe

by Rolando Negoita

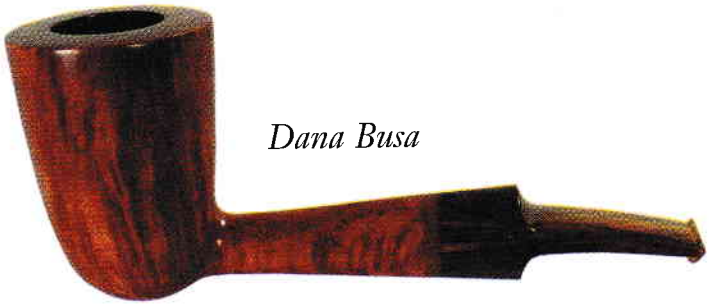




Nine Runners-Up

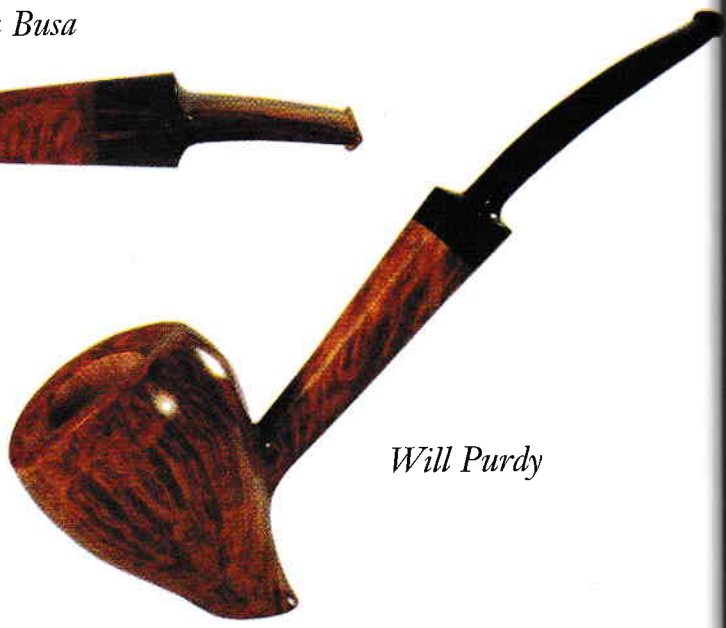
Tyler Lane

Jack Howell



Dana Busa

Gregor Lobnik



Will Purdy

Joseph Skoda

Jim Rainey

Paul Tatum

Steve Stephenson

Other Entries

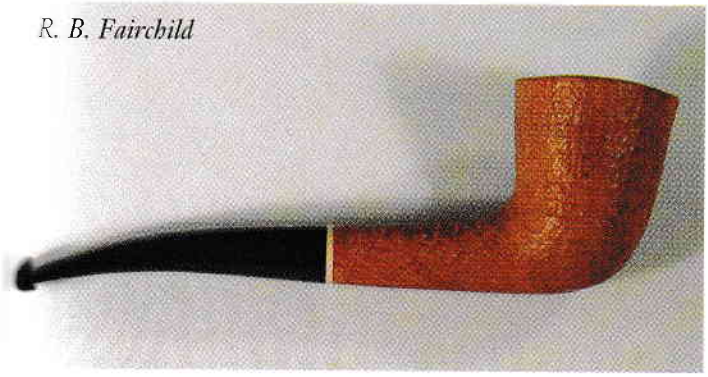
Andrew Glamp

Josef Prammer

Kurt Walden

Soren Eric Andersen

R. B. Fairchild



Mark Tompkins

Mike McKinney

David Wagner

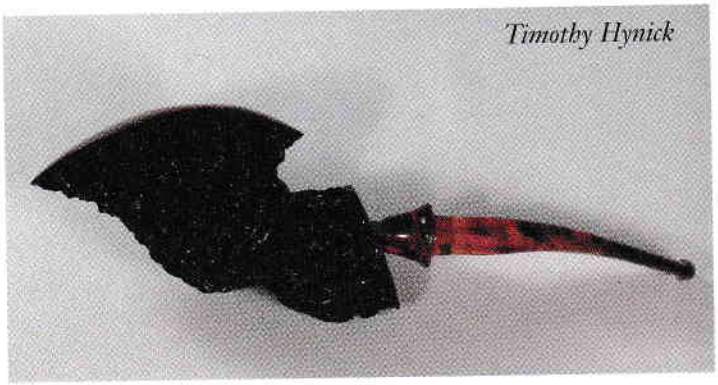
Pete Badillo

Horace DeJarnette

Carsten Idskov

Mark Spell

Gregory S. Clemons


Timothy Hynick

Michael Stanley

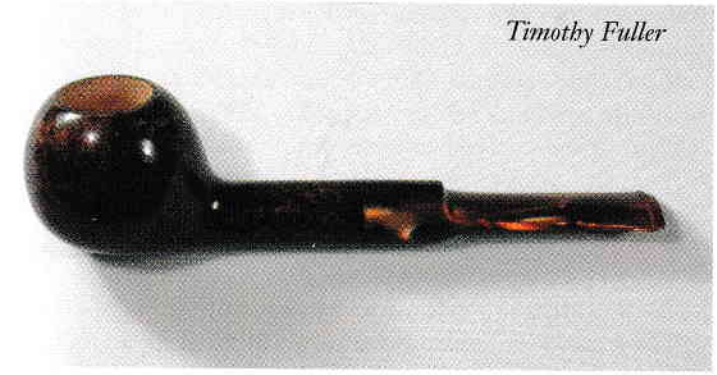
Van Catterall

Paul Hildebrand

Lee Von Erck

D.M. Chlebove

Random


Timothy Fuller

Rad Davis

Greg Paschak

R.J. Seyfried

Don Fuhr

Jerry Sands

John Athanassion

Brian Ruthenberg

Jan Zeman

John Crosby

Pipemaking 101. The Syllabus

Published "how-to" pipemaking manuals are extremely rare. Ben Rapaport identifies the few that have been published and explores their usefulness today

by Ben Rapaport

A great body of work about current-day American, European and Japanese briar pipe makers is already in print. It is au courant to search the Internet and pore through all the issues of *Pipes & Tobaccos* magazine to find information about various artisans, their individual skills and carving techniques, unique finishes, artistic nuances, and nomenclature. On occasion, an Internet search or a pictorial essay in *P&T* reveals images of a noted pipe craftsman in his workshop buffing or polishing a handsome, almost-ready-for-prime-time-sale briar. But that's information about one artist and his unique craftsmanship. What about all the essential principles, lessons learned, and trade secrets of creating a realized pipe from a raw ebauchon?

Is there now, or was there ever a "how-to" manual containing the fundamentals of making pipes, a handbook written for the whittler, the would-be pipemaker, and the historian of pipe lore? And if so, to whom do we owe our debt of gratitude for having illuminated this specialized art and craft?

In the 20th century, only two English-language books on pipemaking found their way to printer's ink. The first was *The Art and Craft of Smoking Pipes* written in 1947 by Emil Doll, a former member of the Wood Industries, a Division of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. He wrote this "Brief Manual and Reference Work for Pipe Manufacturers, Pipe Jobbers, Wholesalers, Retailers, Pipe Salesmen, Pipe Departments, All Chain Stores, Pipe Smokers Everywhere" while employed at H. Behlen & Bros. Inc., Amsterdam, New York, a supplier of "everything for woodfinishing" (as the company's letterhead indicates). In this scarce volume are contained some—not all—of the secrets about pipe craft that are now pretty much in the public domain, such as manufacturing processes, staining, finishing, and even a formula for mastic putty. Informative and entertaining? Certainly. An important contribution to the pipe trade? Absolutely. And if you were a pipe smoker or a pipemaker in the 1940s to the early 1950s, you would certainly have noticed the advertisement for the Doll book in "Add These Books to Your Library. Good Reading for Pipe Smokers," that appeared prominently in each monthly issue of *Pipe Lovers* (January 1946–April 1950); you could have ordered that book from the magazine's editor, George Cushman, at the bargain-basement price of $1.95 postpaid.) Today, this treatise is extremely difficult to find at any price.

Much later, a commercially sold book, *Pimo's Guide to Pipe-Crafting at Home*, appeared. Published in 1976, the *Guide* was an informative handbook, written in easy-to-understand language, accompanied by simple line drawings. It was relatively well received, its original intent to entice a specific target audience—indi-

viduals who dabbled in wood handicrafts—to buy the company's briar blocks and tools. Alan Baier, a recently deceased pipemaker from Manchester Center, Vermont, bought the rights to *Pimo's* in 1995, redesigned the book's cover to give it a fresh look, and reprinted and merchandised it. *Pimo's* is still in print.

Books on pipemaking did not, however, begin with Doll and Pimo. They were certainly not the first to document this science-cum-art, but they were the only two published works of record in English that describe pipemaking in word and illustration. The authoritative guides originated, not surprisingly, in central Europe—Austria-Hungary and Germany to be exact—and date to a period much, much earlier. Carvers in England, France and Holland were also making pipes in various mediums at about the same time; yet, strange as it seems, nothing of substance appeared in print in those countries then or later.

I list eight such "how-to" handbooks, the title of each in its original German—chronologically, not in their order of merit—accompanied by a literal English translation. I have abbreviated several titles and subtitles that are verbose and cumbersome, quite a common occurrence in German writings of the period. Note their publication dates: All were written during the time span from the pipe industry's beginnings through its growth and expansion in Western Europe. As in any field of research, when information on a particular topic enters the public domain, other contributions appear, and the knowledge base is enlarged. For example, the 1799 edition of Tomas' tract (first in the list) was a mere 30 pages, and the last in the list, written by Tomasek, published in 1878, was 212 pages. Knowing their titles, but not their contents, is not of much use, but if you accept the premise that, typically, German writers of the 19th century incisively studied and diligently documented their research, then each was a significant contribution toward a more complete, more elaborate understanding of pipe manufacturing lore. Bear in mind, however, that around the mid-19th century, when St.-Claude, France, was about to become the epicenter of briar manufacture, carvers in Germany and Austria were engaged in making pipes of meerschaum and other woods, so none of the following works offer extensive details on the fabrication of pipes in *Erica arborea*.

In 1799, in the infancy of the pipe as a consumer product, J.U. Tomas, Mechanicus, wrote "*Praktische Anleitung Meerschaumene Pfeifenköpfe zu verfertigen...*" (Erlangen) (Practical Instruction to Manufacture Meerschaum Pipe Bowls...). An expanded, revised edition was published in 1806.

As the popularity of pipe smoking surged in Europe, the industry expanded concomitantly, and the information floodgates opened. Several brief tracts were written in the early 1800s on the treatment of meerschaum pipe bowls, but nothing of consequence appeared in print until 1830, when an anonymous work was published in Ulm, Germany, then a thriving center of wood pipe making: *Die Fabrikation der Rauchtabackpfeifen aus Holzmasern, Meerschaum, Thon und Torkenerde...*(The Manufacture of Smoking Tobacco Pipes of Veined Wood, Meerschaum, Clay, and Terracotta...).

Three years later, Christian Friedrich Gottlob Thon crafted *Gründliche und vollständige, auf richtige Erfahrungen gestützte Anleitung, nicht allein alle Arten meerschaumener, sondern auch höl-*

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erner Pfeifenköpfe fabrikmässig herzustellen… (Weimar, 1833). (Thorough and Complete Guidelines, based on Extensive Experience, for Factory-quality Mass-Production of not just all Types of Meerschaum, but also Wood Pipe Bowls…).

Then, in 1856, appeared the anonymously written work published in Leipzig, *Anweisung den Cigarrenspitzen und Pfeifenköpfen von Meerschaum durch Rauchen…nebst einer kurzen Darstellung über Production und Fabrikation des Meerschaumes…* (Instruction on Meerschaum Cigar Mouthpieces and Pipe Bowls through Smoking…together with a Brief Description on the Production and Fabrication of Meerschaum).

When pipemaking was just about at its pinnacle in Europe, G. Koppa, a Dresden meerschaum pipe maker, wrote *Über Meerschaumwaaren* (Pirna, 1873), (About Meerschaum Goods), and in that same year, Alois Meyer penned *Ueber Meerschaum-, Bernstein- und Drechslerwaaren in der Weltausstellung 1873* (Vienna), (About Meerschaum, Amber, and Turner Goods in the World Exhibition, 1873).

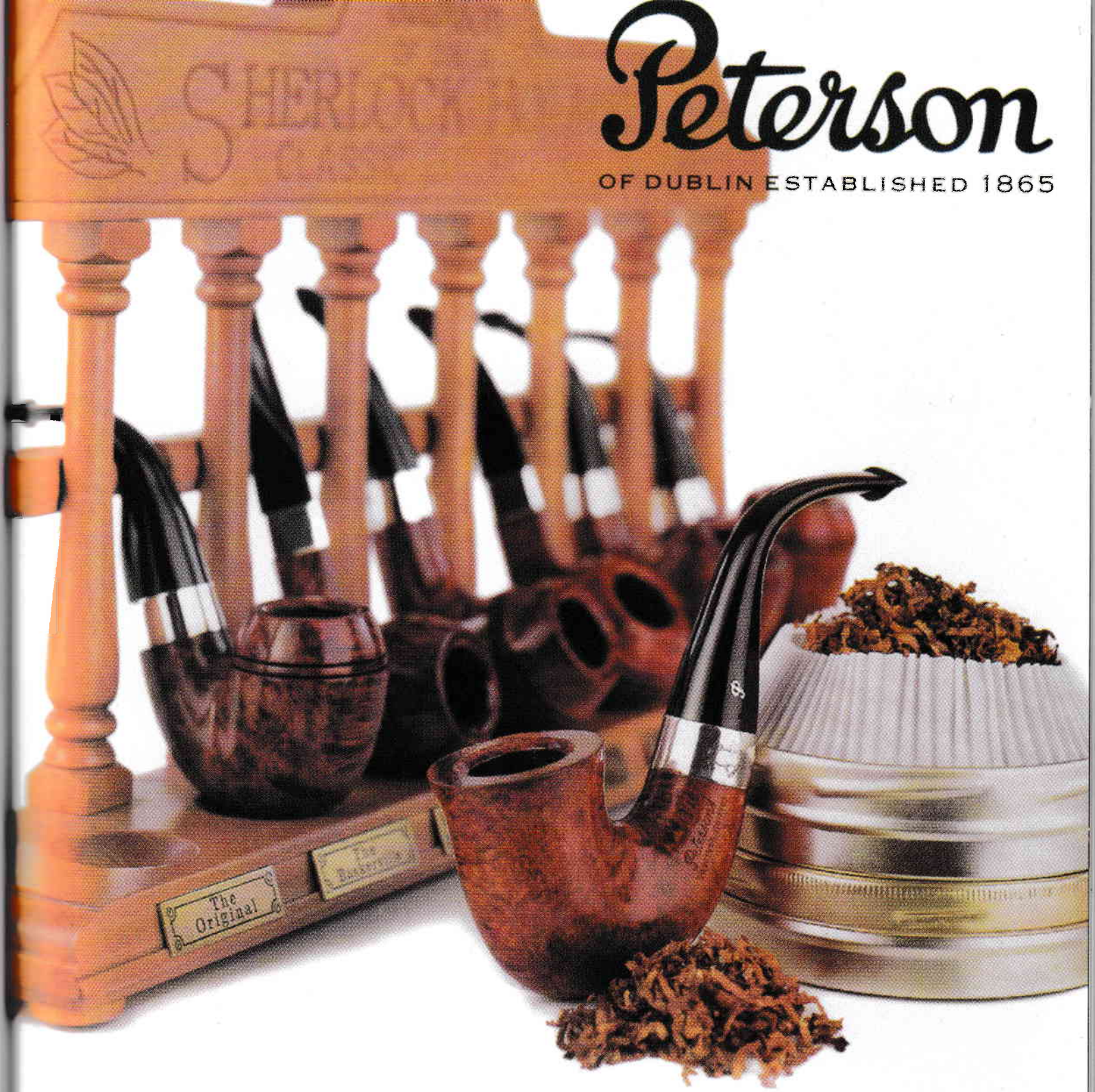
Considered the most authoritative and elaborate is G.M. Raufer, *Die Meerschaum- und Bernsteinwaaren-Fabrikation. Mit einem Anhange über die Erzeugung hölzerner Pfeifenköpfe* (Vienna and Leipzig, 1876). (The Fabrication of Meerschaum and Amber Goods. With an Appendix Regarding the Manufacture of Wood Pipe Bowls).

The last of these 19th century manuscripts was J.N. Tomasek, *Die Pfeifen-Industrie auf der Hohe jetztiger Zeit, oder die Fabrikation der Tabaks- und Cigarrenpfeifen aus Meerschaum und allen Arten Holz* (Weimar, 1878). (The Pipe Industry of Today, or the Fabrication of Tobacco and Cigar Pipes of Meerschaum and all Varieties of Wood).

I do not expect that readers will make a mad dash to their local used bookshop to buy one or more of these old monographs. I even doubt that any would be found in an American bookstore. A few of these may be stashed in the Reference or Rare Books section of larger public and university libraries, and a search of the OCLC database will determine which library holds which books. Sadly, for the very serious student of the pipe who does not have a command of German, none of these was ever translated for publication in another language.

Nowadays, one can find an occasional article on the mechanics of carving a wood pipe, or an interview with one of today's more popular briar, meerschaum or clay pipe makers, but nothing comes even close to the aforementioned books in their depth of detail. The only manuscript in the 25 years that promised to fulfill this need was announced in either a 1988 or 1989 catalog of new Simon & Schuster Inc. releases. In it appeared an illustration and a précis of *The Pipemaker's Book* authored by artisan pipe carver Elliott Nachwalter. The book promised to be an incisive "how to" exposition. For whatever reason, his manuscript never saw printer's ink, and only Elliott and the publisher know why.

Whether any of these German manuscripts is a useful reference today for learning the trade is neither in question nor important; however, there was a time when information detailing the intricate processes and procedures of making meerschaum, wood and clay pipes were readily available to not only the carver, molder and turner, but also to the common man. In other words, some 150 or so years ago the art and craft of pipemaking, at least in Europe, was an "open book." *P&T*



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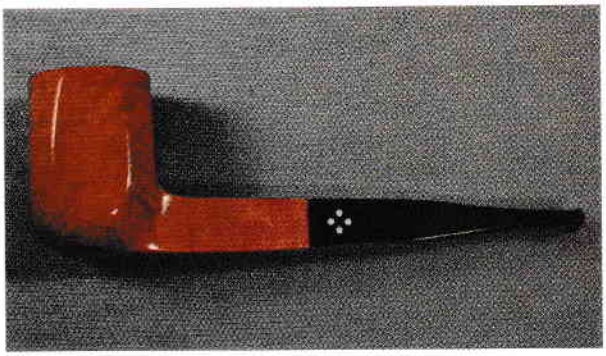

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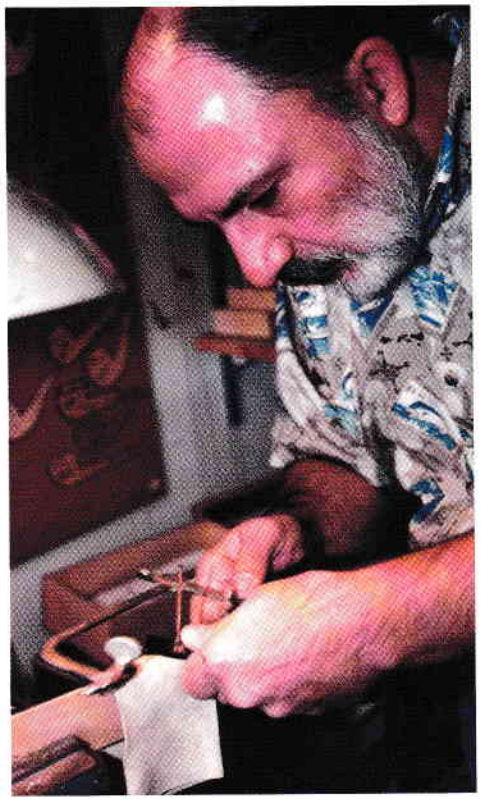
SASIENI LONDON & NEW YORK

Meticulous Determination

Michael Butera knows what he likes, and he won't settle for less—especially in the products that carry his name

by Chuck Stanion

Michael Butera is not shy about admitting that he has a somewhat compulsive personality. But he has harnessed that trait for unprecedented results, producing some of the most highly acclaimed pipes, cigars and pipe tobaccos ever available. He distributes many of the pipe tobaccos that have become favorites of us all: Esoterica tobaccos, J.F. Germain tobaccos, Butera Royal Vintage tobaccos, Pelican and Kingfisher. Butera cigars are one of the most impressive success stories in the industry, winning high praise from *Cigar Aficionado*. And his pipes…well, his pipes are almost impossible to find these days because of minimal current production and high collector appeal. His pipes are still Butera's first love, but the responsibilities of owning a large tobacco distribution company keep him out of the workshop more than he would like. Ten years ago, at his peak pipe production, he was making 150 to 200 pipes a year. Now, unfortunately, he makes only a few pipes each year.



Often referred to as America's greatest pipemaker, Butera won awards for his pipes on a regular basis. At the first pipe show he ever attended as a pipemaker, in 1985, he won the Best Standard Shape award. He won awards every year he actively presented pipes at Pipe Collectors International shows—nine straight years. His pipes have achieved legendary status, coveted by collectors and commanding impressive prices. He attained this level of respect through a simple—but far from easy—philosophy: "I will not market anything," he says, "that doesn't represent the best, to my own taste, in its category."

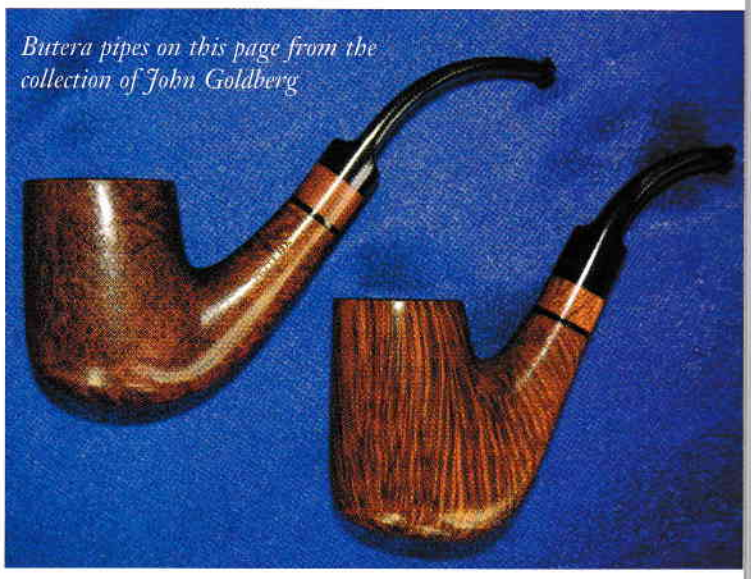
That's why it took him three and a half years of practice and experimentation before he would sell one of his pipes. "If I couldn't produce pipes that I enjoyed looking at and smoking as much as or more than my favorite brands, I would not have continued. For example, if I found myself preferring one of my Castello pipes over one of my own, then my pipes were just not good enough. For me, in all respects, Butera pipes had to be equal to or better than the best in their catagory."

Before he could recognize that kind of quality, Butera had to learn pipes, and he started as most of us did—by smoking inexpensive pipes. "My first pipe was a Judd, which I purchased from Judd's Pipe Shop, one of the original pipe shops here in Houston." Butera also smoked GBDs and Everymans pipes, but soon graduated to a Caminetto, his first expensive pipe. "That was a big deal for me, going from $15 to $70," he says. The smoking quality was a revelation to him, and he started getting interested in the history of pipes. As his interest grew, so did his pipe collection, now to include such brand names as Radice, Dunhill and Ascorti. He began to sell or trade many of these pipes when he discovered Castello.

In the late 1970s, Castello pipes were hard to find, and even then only Sea Rock finishes were available. But Butera searched and over time gathered a collection. "The caking qualities impressed me," he says, "and they really delivered a natural tobacco flavor." In 1982, Butera decided that he needed to visit Italy and meet Carlo Scotti of Castello. While he was there, Scotti gave him a tour of the Castello factory and walked him through all of the processes, "with the exception of curing and staining," says Butera. "He was very hospitable. A truly great man."

Also while in Italy, Butera visited Baldo Baldi, whose work environment was a polar opposite to that of Castello. Where Castello had a large, immaculately clean factory with 15 workers, Baldo Baldi worked by himself in a dimly lit workshop, covered in briar dust, using only hand files for shaping. "He makes all his pipes one at a time, all by hand. I visited with him for three days," says Butera, "and watched him make a pipe from start to finish. I was hooked and knew right then I had to become a pipemaker. Baldo encouraged this idea and sold me my first 50 blocks of briar."

Butera returned home with his briar and a new enthusiasm—he wanted to make high-quality pipes. But that kind of skill isn't acquired overnight, and he had much to teach himself. He started with the techniques of Baldo Baldi, using hand files, without sanding disks or any sophisticated equipment. He didn't even use a drill press at first. "I held the block in one hand, and a hand drill in the



Butera pipes on this page from the collection of John Goldberg

other. I managed to hit a few airholes with a few tobacco chambers and finished a few pipes." He was pleased with how these pipes looked and felt. But then he smoked one. "It was horrible. It was bitter. I had a lot more work to do." That's when the intensive research phase of his pipemaking education was launched.

"It took me a long time to get to a point where I was happy with my pipes," says Butera. "I gave a lot more thought to things other than the artistic aspects. I had to think about fit and finish, the mechanics, the physics, and now the taste of briar. One late discovery, among others, came after almost three years making test pipes. I discovered my pipes smoked sweeter with a 4-mm airhole than those with a 3-mm airhole. Also, if the hole and countersink are different dimensions where they meet at the end of the mouthpiece, the button will disperse the smoke rather than push a bead of smoke directly onto your tongue. This helps eliminate tongue bite, with a lot less moisture. Less hot moisture always means a sweeter smoke."

His first 50 blocks went quickly; he needed to find more briar and soon found that learning to make a pipe was only one part of the equation—finding a good source of briar was another. "I began to purchase Greek briar from other American pipemakers, but you can't expect the best out of the bag that way. So I decided to go overseas." Butera contacted David Field, who distributed Ashton pipes at that time. Field put him in touch with Bill Taylor of Ashton. Taylor invited Butera to meet him at the briar mill in Italy where his own briar originated, and Butera managed to buy some quality briar. The next year didn't go as well. He went back to the mill, where he found 2,500 pieces of briar laid out for him to inspect. It looked pretty good, but the owner kept finding reasons to keep Butera away from the mill. "He was always pushing us to have lunch, have some wine, see various sights. I didn't feel comfortable with that, so I insisted on signing each and every block. Every single one; it took a couple of days." On his last day in Italy, Butera went back to the mill before going to the airport, and grabbed 20 signed blocks to take with him. "When I got home, I started cutting the plateau, and sure enough, the wood was all cracked. There are ways to camouflage briar so that it looks good even when it isn't." Luckily, before Butera signed the sales contract, he insisted that a clause promising payment regardless of circumstances be crossed out. After discovering the poor quality of the briar, he refused the shipment, and the mill operator threatened to sue. "I sent copies of my paperwork. He had no recourse but to take it back. That was very close. I almost bought 2,500 blocks of useless briar. It would have wiped me out." That

"This is the pipe I made for the 2004 Chicago Pipe Show silent auction," says Butera. "The bowl and mouthpiece are made from one of my oldest and most beautiful straight-grain blocks of briar. Fortunately, the bowl and mouthpiece both finished out smooth. The meerschaum shank was made from one of 300 stones I was lucky enough to purchase about 15 years ago. I was told these stones were sold into the USA, prior to the meerschaum embargo, to a well-known American meerschaum carver in the 1940s. His family sold them to Royal Meerschaum, which in turn sold some to me. After my purchase, I understand there were over 5,000 stones left, which were all shipped back to Turkey to be made into pipes. At the 2004 Chicago Show auction, this pipe sold for $1,000."

could well have been the end of Butera pipes.

That briar nightmare occurred yet again, with yet another mill. It seemed that it might be impossible to find the raw material necessary for his pipes. "But I finally found a mill," says Butera, "way up on a hill in a beautiful, tiny Italian town I had never heard of. They supplied briar to many Danish makers, Castello, Baldi and a few others." This supplier assured Butera that he could provide excellent Corsican briar on a consistent basis. "He said, for a price, you can have whatever you want." Price didn't matter as much as quality for Butera, so a relationship began. "Whenever I visited, he would always have briar of the finest quality set aside for me in piles. I could accept or refuse each pile, but couldn't mix and match—it was the whole pile or nothing. I never had a problem with that. Because there just isn't a lot of that quality available, they could only sell me 200 to 300 pieces at a time. This was perfect for me, but even with this high-quality briar, I still had to throw away about one out of every four blocks. I considered this ratio a good one, as long as it continued year after year; and it did; sometimes better. I bought from this briar family for years, and still do. I have a lot of this old beautiful wood still aging on racks."

Of course, the experimentation went much better with appropriate supplies of briar, and Butera continued his research. He consulted with experts in physics, woodworking and chemistry, and he read everything he could find that might have any application to briar or pipemaking. "I spent a full year doing patent research in the field of smoking pipes," says Butera. "I found an original copy of Alfred Dunhill's patent for his oil-curing process." He was interested to learn that the Dunhill process had not been designed with a sweeter-tasting pipe in mind, but to achieve a better sandblast texture in the pipes by hardening the exterior of the wood—the pleasant smoking characteristics of Dunhill pipes had been a mere side effect. Butera also turned to the subject of violin making and learned about various theories concerning the sound characteristics of Stradivarius violins. "One theory," says Butera, "attributes their unique quality not to the way the violins were made, but to how the wood was conditioned, the location of the trees used for the wood, the circumstances of their being cut down, the transport of the logs, and the type of pond where they soaked for a certain length of time. Other important factors were the finishing materials, and how they were used as a last step to 'fine-tune' the violins." This theory, he says, greatly influenced the development of his own processes for pipemaking.

In 1985, Butera finally felt he could make a pipe that met his own stringent expectations. He sold only two pipes at his first show.

"This pipe [left] is a 'Royal Vintage' Signature piece that won 'Best Freehand Briar Pipe' at the 1994 PCI Show. I was able to purchase this pipe from its original owner about four years ago. I will keep it in my personal collection."

"This smooth bulldog [above] is one of the finest straight-grain pipes I ever made," says Butera. "A very good friend owned this pipe with the understanding I would have first chance to buy it back should he want to sell. After about six years, it became a part of my personal collection."

both to noted collector Feathers Thompson. One of these pipes also won his first award. Butera's confidence was bolstered and he continued studying and improving his techniques.

During all this time, Butera was also working at his "real" career in the insurance business. He was doing very well, managing a large staff, selling his own policies and maintaining a very respectable income. But his pipemaking had started monopolizing his thoughts, and insurance was not of equal importance to him. "I thought about making pipes all the time," he says. "I was dreaming about them." It was around 1990 when he finally decided to get out of the insurance business and devote all his time to pipemaking. "It's hard to explain the things you do when you have such a passion for something. I simply could not stand not doing it. I was making a good income in insurance, and knew that would change carving pipes for a living. So I thought, I've been broke before, in fact I was broke when I first got into the insurance business. I figured I could live on very little, so I gave up insurance and turned all of my accounts over to another agent. Everyone around me thought I was nuts—I thought I was nuts. But, at the office all I could think about was being home in my garage, making pipes. So it was time to move on."

Not only did Butera succeed, he set a new standard for American pipemaking. His high-quality pipes were perhaps the first American handmades favorably compared to those made by the more celebrated European makers. He was also able to sell them at prices considerably higher than most American carvers could at that time. "I introduced my pipes at $95 for a carved pipe and $120 for a smooth. The carvers I knew at the time thought my prices were too high, and wondered how I continued to get that kind of money for my pipes. Well, I did, and would probably attribute that to the fit, finish and balance of my pipes. American pipemakers back then were making beautiful pipe shapes, but for many of them, fit, finish, balance and even smoking quality seemed to be a secondary part to their work. So, if they asked me about their work, I would say: Spend a little more time and finish your pipes. I believe when smokers/collectors buy new pipes, subconsciously, on a level they may not be aware of, fit, finish and balance of the pipes they choose is what appeals to them most."

"When I came along, my pipes were compared to Castello, Dunhill and a few other Italian brands. This was my dream come true because I wanted to produce to the high-end market. The midrange and low-end markets, however, are just as important to the whole of pipemaking—for successful pipemaking, decide where your best fits into the marketplace, then produce and price to that specific market."

Soon, other pipemakers were coming to Butera for advice. They knew of his strenuous research and the many years he devoted to the finer details of making quality pipes. They knew he was doing remarkable work and they knew he was successful at it. He was happy to share all he learned from others, and most of what he discovered on his own. "I don't talk much about curing," he says, "but I will tell you, for a sweeter smoking pipe, you must do something about the tannic acid inside the bowls. You can dissolve away the tannins if you shape your pipes down to just a little oversized, boil the bowls in distilled water and then dry them in your oven at low heat with the door open until they are moisture-free. If that's all you do, your pipes will smoke much sweeter. Though Butera won't reveal the specifics of his curing process, he does provide some clues. "First, the briar should be at least 18 months old. If what I do is called curing, it's a natural process that produces a neutral smoke. My pharmacist brother had this very large, very old book of pharmaceutical compounds, listing every chemical compound known to man with descriptions of what they're used for. I read that book twice, just to get ideas on what chemicals do certain things. I learned that people in woodworking for instance, use gelatin. With

"Kaywoodie used to make their 'Allbriar' pipe, a briar pipe with a briar stem," explains Butera. "I have a few in my collection and always wanted to make my own version. The picture looks great, but in person there were a few visible flaws in the briar. For this reason I keep the pipe in my personal collection, never to be sold. This Bulldog [above right] has my 'Vintage Classic Special' finish. Before staining, I use a very dangerous looking, self-made cutting tool in a very dangerous high-speed way to literally rip and tear the graining in the briar. Next, I sandblast the pipe to smooth out the radical splitting and add a contradicting detail to the finish. I always wear protective eyeglasses when I make this finish, and at times wish I had a protective vest as well."

a little more research, I was able to develop a neutral-tasting carbon liner to protect my bowls, using gelatin as the glue. As a side note to stress the importance of research, I also read and learned about natural, useful products used to dissolve tannins. My research and development took three and a half years to finalize the total system I use today.

Butera's pipes had gained widespread respect and popularity partly through his business relationship with Barry Levin, who promoted his pipes and featured them in a mailer he distributed to pipe collectors nationwide. By 1991, Butera was becoming more of a full product line company, ready to introduce Butera cigars and pipe tobaccos to market. "As a result, Barry and I both saw the growth of our respective businesses going in different directions, so we mutually decided to continue, independent from one another." Shortly after that, Butera introduced his cigars and pipe tobaccos at the retailers trade show. He decided that the best way to reach the number of consumers that he hoped to was through a more traditional distribution into retail tobacco shops. They were an immediate success.

That is also about the time Butera stopped making pipes. The rigors of his tobacco business took all his time. He threw himself into tobacco just as he had with pipes, and because he insisted on perfection, he had to immerse himself completely. He learned much of what he needed through careful, studious smoking. "To this day, I can smoke a blend blind, tell you who made it, tell you what's in it and about 80 percent of the time give you its exact name." says Butera. "I got obsessive with it, smoking and studying every tobacco blend I could get my hands on."

As with his pipemaking, Butera decided that if he couldn't make tobaccos he liked as well as or more than what he already enjoyed smoking, he wasn't going to produce them. "I contacted Mike McNeil of McClelland Tobacco. His blends were my absolute favorites, so I knew he had the types of tobaccos I wanted to work with. He would send me raw leaf. I would smoke them raw, process them to a very minor degree here and smoke them again. After, I would discuss my ideas with Mike. I would suggest the specific tobaccos and percentages for a new blend. We would discuss whether it should be heat-pressed or cold-pressed; whether it should be aged in bulk before being tinned or not; and what, if any, essence or flavor should be added. Whether he approved of my blends or not, he would always send samples exactly as I wanted them produced. If a new blend needed tweaking, and most of the time they did, I depended 100 percent on Mike for the answers. If I didn't like something in particular, or wanted to make a minor change in taste, he knew what to do—and did it."

That collaboration between Butera and McClelland Tobacco became very successful and Butera pipe tobaccos (there are now seven different blends) became popular with discriminating pipe smokers everywhere. Mike and Mary McNiel have been continually impressed with Butera's instinctive understanding of tobacco. "He has a creativity and tenacity," says Mike McNiel, "that works beyond pipes. Without any tobacco leaf or equipment, he has developed pipe tobacco manufacturing ideas that are astonishingly unique. Mary and I are glad to call him a friend, and we are very glad he has no factory."

Mary is especially impressed with Butera's ability to draw from disparate fields of study. "When I think of Mike Butera," she says, "I think of that marvelous PBS series, Connections. He's very smart and curious and committed to quality in everything he touches. Once he gets an idea into his head—a goal—his little antennae are quivering, looking for the solution to his problem in every area. He leaps from discipline to discipline in his search for the better way. It's a wonderful thing to see." ***P&T***

Butera pipe nomenclature is complex; space limitations make their comprehensive publication prohibitive. However, a basic grade chart for Butera pipes was published in the Spring 2004 issue.

Butera pipes are difficult to find, but are occasionally available at pipe shows and on eBay. Butera cigars and pipe tobaccos are available at tobacconists nationwide. Butera pipe collector John Goldberg, who provided many of the pipes pictured here, may be contacted at 773.835.1004.

"From 1985 on, several of my pipes won awards at the annual PCI Collectors Show. All were sold before the last day of the show when the judges declared the winners. Over the years, I have had the good fortune to get the three winning pipes shown here back and into my personal collection. The 1985 'Best Standard Shape Pipe' was especially pleasing for me because this was my very first show and the first time I displayed my work. Receiving this pipe [above center] from the original owner was even more special to me. Feathers Thompson, a long-time collector of Charatan, Castello and other pipes, purchased this pipe early on the first day of the show. We have been very good friends ever since and his honest impressions and suggestions for my work early on helped me become not only a better pipemaker but a better person as well. He was not always positive, but he was always straightforward and honest. He purchased pipes from me every year and always let me know what he thought. One day, about 12 years from the day we met, I received a package in the mail. As you have probably guessed, enclosed was my first award-winning pipe, unsmoked and in pristine condition. His note stated he never smoked the pipe because it was so special, being my first. It meant much to him but he felt it would mean as much or more to me. I tried to pay for it, and of course he would not hear of it. For this kindness and for much, much more, I truly love this man and hope that everyone, at sometime in their lives, meet and gain a friendship with someone like Feathers. The other two award-winning pipes seen here were purchased from the original owners."

"This pipe was a very special project for a very special friend of mine," says Butera. "He always spent Saturday morning with me in the shop, watching as I made pipes. This particular Saturday morning, he had taken delivery of a brand new Ferrari and wanted to celebrate with a new pipe. The new pipe had to smoke well, without failure, while driving his new car with the top up or down, at high speeds. I had some help with the design as he described a pipe his grandfather smoked when he was a child. He referred to the pipe as 'The Convertible,' and as he described the shape and how it functioned, I frantically sketched my interpretation. A few hours later we agreed on the sketch. Of course he wanted the pipe to be smooth, with the finest of straight grain, and cut from a single block so that in the "closed " position the straight grain would match from the top half to the bottom half. Although I was confident in my ability to make the piece, the anxiety was almost too much when I had to cut one of my largest, most beautifully grained blocks in half. This particular block was one of my finest and I had already visualized a most beautiful, large bent apple for it. I am pleased to say the pipe was made with this block on the first attempt. Another real trick was to design a durable fitting that held the bottom section together with the top section in such a way that the pipe could be smoked in both the open and closed positions."

Dunhill Miniature Shop

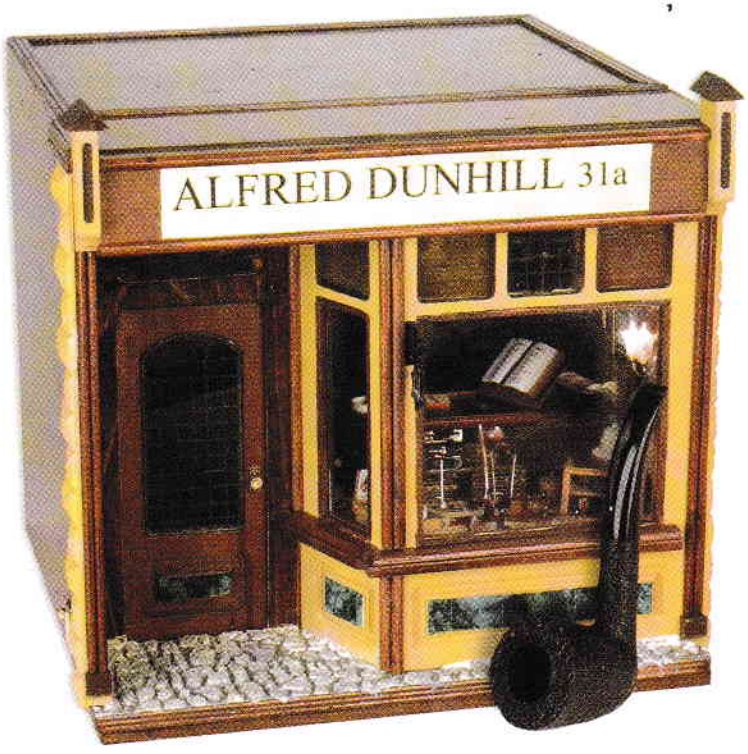
Chicago pipe collector Craig Cobine builds miniature of early Dunhill shop

by Stephen A. Ross

Photos by Vicki Hardy

Thanks to Craig Cobine, people attending the 2004 Chicagoland International Pipe & Tobacciana Show were transported in space and time to the original Alfred Dunhill tobacco shop in London, circa 1910. No, they weren't whisked away in some Jules Verne-inspired time machine, and they weren't smoking any special new hallucinogenic pipe tobacco blend either. Instead, they viewed a 1-to-12 scale miniature interpretive reproduction of the shop, which Cobine built.

A real estate lawyer for more than 20 years, Cobine is also an enthusiastic Dunhill pipe smoker and collector who is especially fond of collecting turn-of-the-century cigar and pipe advertisements. Leafing through the pages of Michael Balfour's book, *Alfred Dunhill: One Hundred Years and More*, Cobine saw pictures of the original Dunhill shop and became inspired. "I thought it would be nice to try to build a reproduction of the shop in time for the Chicago show," he says by phone from his Naperville, Illinois, office. "My wife, Linda, is really involved in the miniature hobby and she agreed to help me."



From the earliest stages of his project, Cobine knew that it would be next to impossible to make an exact replica of the shop, especially since he had only the photos from Balfour's book as his source material. Instead, Cobine decided that he would attempt to capture the feel of an early-20th-century pipe shop.

Cobine estimates that he spent approximately 200 hours gathering supplies and building the miniature. Searching the Internet, visiting shops specializing in miniatures, and attending numerous miniature hobbyist conventions, Cobine slowly gathered most of the materials he needed, including a 12-inch by 12-inch miniature kit of a typical Victorian shop online.

After receiving the kit from England, Cobine selected interior fittings such as display cases and furniture. He also selected wallpaper, light fixtures and flooring to reflect the early-20th-century atmosphere. "Almost everything I purchased for the store is commercially available," he says. "If I came across an item and it looked like it might belong in a typical London tobacco shop in the Victorian era, I purchased it."

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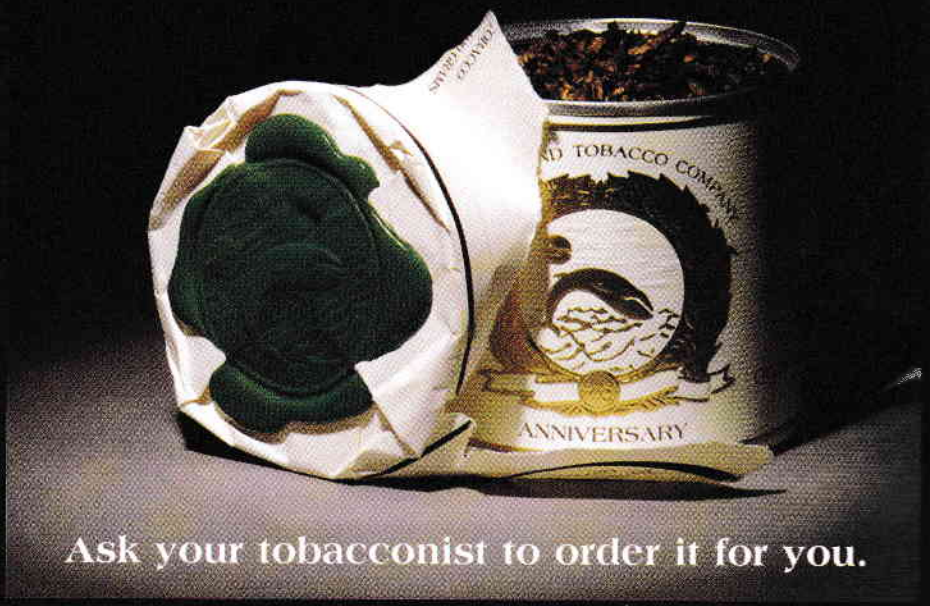

Ask your tobacconist to order it for you.

Most of the furnishings that Cobine felt would be appropriate for an early-20th-century tobacco shop were relatively easy to find. "I was amazed at the number of smoking-related miniatures that were available," he says. "The early 20th century is a popular period for miniature collectors, and of course that was a time when smoking pipes was extremely popular, too. I found a lot of pipes, pipe racks, and ashtrays."

Some of the pipes Cobine purchased were handmade by European artists, but most of them were undecorated metal castings. Cobine says he spent a lot of time cleaning and painting the white metal castings of some of the pipes and pipe racks. The Cobines went into such detail that they even painted a little white spot on every pipe—this is, after all, a miniature of the Dunhill store.w Cobine found some of the cigar boxes for his store on the market, but others he made from small strips of wood, and he used his computer and color printer to make miniature cigar labels and Dunhill tobacco tin labels.

Finding the appropriate glass jars for the tobacco bar was the most difficult task, according to Cobine. He searched everywhere for weeks before attending an international miniature show, where he found six jars. He bought them all on the spot and eventually added six more. Cobine adds that he's still looking for more jars.

Once he got the jars for the tobacco bar, Cobine took a small amount of his own Dunhill 965 tobacco, finely ground it and filled each jar with tobacco. "Some of the cigar boxes I bought had miniature cigars made from real tobacco," he says. "I thought it would be a nice addition to the shop."

Once everything had been purchased and modified to fit his Dunhill motif, Cobine says, the real fun began. "Putting it all together was fun because then I got to play with it all. I used double-sided tape on the shelves and I placed the pipes in an order that I thought a retailer would use. I reserved the better pieces for the front window."

After the Chicago pipe show, Cobine agreed to place his miniature on display at Frank Burla's pipe museum. Although his miniature Dunhill shop is now displayed at a museum, don't expect Cobine to take on the challenge of creating other miniature tobacco shops. "Once is enough," he says chuckling. *P&T*

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Roush's Return

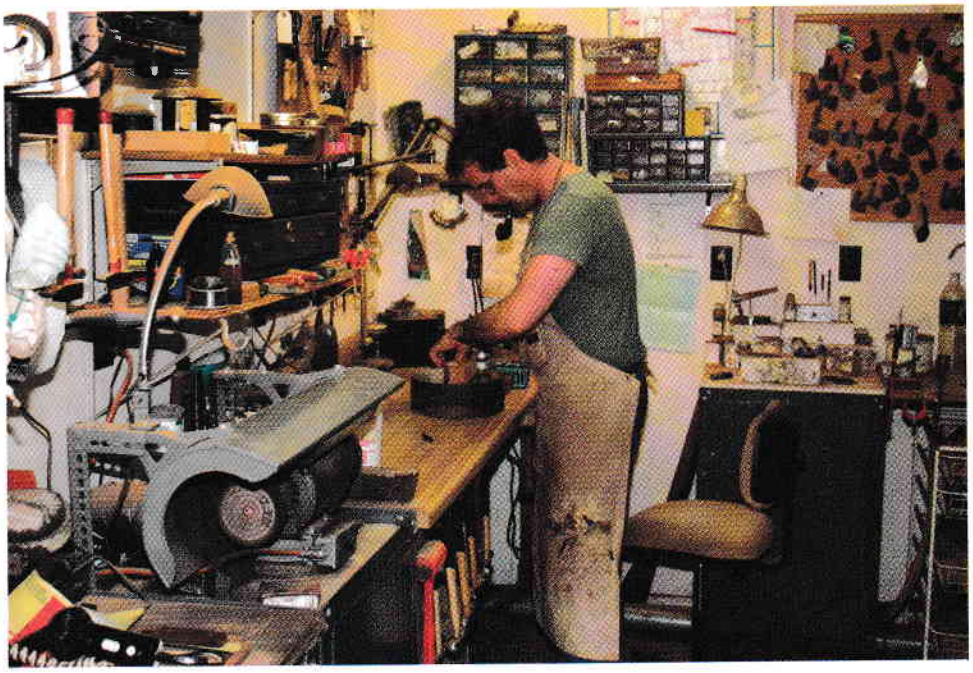
After several years' hiatus from pipemaking, Larry Roush is back with some striking refinements to his already impressive previous skills

by Chuck Stanion

"Anything can happen with briar," says Larry Roush. He's sitting on his patio outside his home in Ohio with dozens of Roush pipes spread out on the table in front of him—more Roush pipes than most people have ever seen in one place. They aren't his; he doesn't have a single finished pipe ready for sale, though he owns a few of his own. They sell too quickly to maintain any stock on hand. No, these pipes belong to collector Ben Ciccarelli, who owns more than 50 Roush pipes and has kindly loaned them for this interview. Roush picks them up absently as he talks, turning them over in his hands, using them to demonstrate his points. "Pits can appear when you're working with briar anywhere, anytime, sometimes in the worst possible places. If there were one here, for example," he says, pointing to the end of the shank, "That would be bad. I've seen pits that were almost imperceptible open up during the shaping process and become these gargantuan craters, and then the pipe is just junk. Sometimes a pit is small and if there's enough meat in the pipe design, they disappear with sanding. But if they appear in the mortise or in the tobacco chamber, that's it, game over. I toss it."

Of course, Roush is not anxious to discard his work, but he won't take chances on his finished products. "I'm pretty sure that when a pipe burns out, it's because there's a flaw in the tobacco chamber, sometimes a flaw you can't see. It may be a sixteenth of an inch under the surface and you have no idea that it's there, and then it opens up into something dangerous with the heat. I never want to replace a pipe. I look for pits when I'm done drilling, I really examine the inside, and if there's anything other than smooth wood, I toss it, I don't waste any more energy on it. I'm not going to risk spending all that time making a pipe, then selling it and have it burn out, then have to make another pipe to replace it. It's best to toss it. It's best for whoever buys the pipe and it's best for the reputation of my pipes."

His pipes do indeed possess a reputation for fine smoking quality, distinctive design and meticulous workmanship. It is a reputation he has had to build twice, though.



In the late 1980s, Larry Roush was a machinist, a jewelry maker and a pipe collector who had found a fun way to combine all three—by putting decorative silver and gold bands on his favorite pipes. "I didn't know any better at the time," he says, admitting that he had no understanding of the sanctity of maintaining original condition in a collectible pipe. But even had he known, he probably wouldn't have cared. "I was banding Charatans, Castellos, Barlings—I was banding everything, just because it looked cool, and I liked it. I was doing leaf bands and all kinds of complex designs."

After beautifying his pipe collection, his creative energy required more, so Roush decided to try carving a pipe for himself. "I saw this ad in a pipe magazine, the old PCI [Pipe Collectors International] *Pipe Smoker*, so I called up this guy to order some briar and he mentioned that he made pipes. I said, 'Really? What do you do, sell them or smoke them or what?' He said, 'Yeah, I sell some pipes. My name's Michael Butera.' Well, I'd never heard of the guy, the name meant nothing to me, so I just said, 'Hey Mike, how ya doing,' and we hit it off and started talking." Roush told Butera about the decorative bands he was doing on his pipes and how he wanted to make a pipe of his own. Only later did Roush look into just who Butera was. "I felt like an idiot," he says. "He's the king of pipemaking in America and I didn't even know who I was talking to."

The next time they spoke, Roush learned that Butera had been looking for someone to do some decorative band work for him, but had not yet found anyone who could perform to his expectations. Roush sent some photos of his work and Butera liked them well enough to ask that some of the banded pipes be forwarded so he could examine them in person. "After Mike saw them," says Roush, "he told

me he'd never seen band work of that quality before and asked me to band some pipes for him." Later, Butera would travel to Roush's workshop and learn his own banding techniques. An important friendship and collaboration had begun.

Roush also visited Butera, which is how he began perfecting his own craft. "I went down to Texas to see Mike and we got along great," says Roush. "He showed me the basics. I didn't need to be told everything; in fact, it's better for me to learn through experimentation. On some things he would come right out and tell me how to do it, because he knew I couldn't figure it out in a million years, nobody could. But other things, other techniques, I would try and try and then say, Mike, how are you doing this, I'm having a hard time. Well, he'd say, what have you tried so far? So I'd tell him. Well, he'd say, have you tried this? Have you tried that? I'd say no, and he'd nod and say, 'Hmmm.' So he'd kind of lead me into an area where he knew I needed to be and I'd learn that way. That's the best way for me to learn. I would try things on my own, and he would gently push me along the right path, and that would lead me to other areas that I could learn from and finally arrive at my own technique, my own style and design."

Those first pipes, though, didn't reflect the acclaim that Roush's future pipes would bring. "I see a lot of new pipemakers," he says, "and their first pipes are just amazing. Very impressive. You should see my first pipe—I still have it—it's crap, big-time crap, it's embarrassing." At first, he just wanted to make a pipe to smoke, something just for himself. "Then I made a few more, and worked on making them better, and developed some curing and finishing techniques, and made a few more. Friends started encouraging me to sell them. Barry Levin saw some and Butera saw some and they told me I should think about selling some pipes. So I gave it a try."

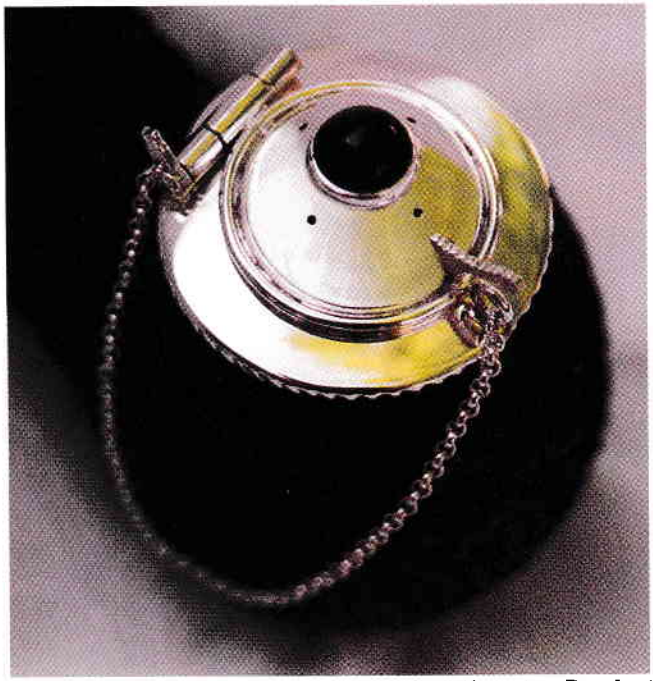
There was no Internet back then, at least not one that was easy to use by craftsmen selling one-of-a-kind items. The only way for Roush to sell pipes was to go to pipe shows or wholesale them to shops. He started selling pipes at around $95, but it was far from profitable. "I sometimes had $30 in materials alone in a pipe and who knows how many hours, plus tools and overhead. Those pipes were paying me around $1 an hour for my time. So I was doing something wrong, and again Mike Butera helped me out, this time with some business advice." The only way to get anywhere with a pipemaking business, Butera told him, was to get people to smoke those

pipes. They were useless sitting on a table at a pipe show; they had to build a reputation. Until people were smoking those pipes and talking about those pipes, they would go nowhere.

Even with high-quality pipes, that initial launch is difficult. "Why should collectors spend money on an unknown like me," says Roush, "when they could buy Castellos, Barlings, Ser Jacopos, Dunhills, all these other great pipes?" But one collector in particular was taking notice. Feathers Thompson, well-known at pipe shows and in collector circles, was famous for his Charatan collection, as well as just being one of the all-around greatest guys who ever smoked a pipe. He was known for recognizing young talent, and he liked Roush's work. "When a serious collector like Feathers Thompson is walking around pipe shows, smoking one of your pipes," says Roush, "people notice." Other reputable people also began talking about this new pipemaker. "Things began taking off when guys like Marty Pulvers, Barry Levin and Mike Butera started talking about how good my pipes were. I was very fortunate to get support of that caliber."

But in 1995, after making 394 pipes professionally and entering a phase in his pipemaking when collectors were anxious for more of his work, Roush quit. He disappeared from the pipe scene. There were no more Roush pipes, and the ones that existed started to appreciate dramatically in value.

"I was working full-time as a machinist and wanted to pursue metalwork and jewelry making," says Roush. "I couldn't do all that and still make pipes. And the money just wasn't there; I was losing my shirt, so I decided to get out." It would be six years before he made another pipe. Many of his admirers and supporters knew that was a mistake—if not for



Decorative silverwork is Roush's specialty. Above is a Roush pipe fitted with a spectacular sterling windcap and chain. More than 20 individual handmade pieces went into its making. At right, Roush shapes a pipe using his disk sander, which is mounted just two feet off the floor so that he looks down as he works. "That height gives me more distance from eye to disk," says Roush, "which provides a better perspective for shaping. Also, I rest my arm on my leg and can use my leg muscles for rough shaping, which is sometimes a big help."

Roush, for the hobby in general. Roush pipes were well-known for their distinctive stylings, signature metalwork and excellent smoking qualities. Those people who had grown to appreciate Roush pipes were shocked and saddened that they had disappeared. It seemed to many that it was a terrible waste of talent. It would take years for Roush to reach the same conclusion himself.

"Sometimes God puts things into people's lives to get their attention," he says. "For me, He had to throw a punch before I got the idea that I was doing something wrong." This blow took the form of the loss of his job in 2001. "I got fired," he says. "The only time in my life I was ever fired. But I guess you could say I fired myself; my heart just wasn't in it." It was a sales job, and he was doing very well financially despite not enjoying the work. His clients liked him and he could afford the trappings of success: a Rolex, a nice wardrobe, a nice car. But that obviously wasn't what he wanted, whether he knew it or not. "It was devastating," he says. "It's hard to recover from something like that."

But things started to happen that helped Roush find his direction. A friend, Steve Cady, a professor at Bowling Green, urged him to attend one of his seminars about finding passion in one's life and discovering what one truly wants to do. About that time Roush also began noticing his pipes being sold on eBay. "They were selling for crazy amounts of money," he says. "These guys were getting more for my used pipes than I ever got for them new." As he was thinking about this evolution in the popularity of his former work, a package arrived at his door with a dozen different issues of *P&T* magazine and a fan letter from the editor thanking him for his contribution to the hobby, offering the magazines as a source of information about what had been happening since Roush's departure from pipemaking, and suggesting that if he should ever consider making pipes again, it would certainly be a welcome event. "I'd never heard of *P&T*," says Roush, "but it was a very flattering letter and the magazine seemed to reflect a healthy state of the hobby." As he leafed through the magazines, he started thinking that maybe he was missing pipemaking more than he realized.

To help focus his thoughts, he took a pilgrimage to the mountains of upstate New York to visit with a friend, Shana Kohnstamm, an artist who had always encouraged Roush in his own artistic endeavors. "The subject of time came up," says Roush. Time had always been a restricting presence in his life and he discovered that he resented it. "When I was a machinist I checked my watch to be to work on time, checked it to go to lunch and again to get back on time. Then the sales job was even worse because I had appointments with clients and I had to travel and it all revolved around a dedication to the clock." Now he found himself sitting in the middle of the woods with his friend. He had no job, no particularly pressing responsibilities, he was surrounded by the soothing natural world of upstate New York—and he was looking at his watch. "I loved my Rolex," he says. "It was such a cool little mechanical device, a precision instrument, and I really like that type of thing." Shana encouraged him to take the watch off. Now it's a simple thing to take a watch off, but at the same time, it can be a huge step. That Rolex was symbolic of a way of life that was now beginning to seem wrong for Roush. "I took it off," he says. "I put it in my pocket. I never put it on again. Later, I sold the thing, got rid of it, and I don't miss it. Sometimes now I don't even know what time of year it is, let alone the time of day, and I'm much happier."

A lot had happened in the space of just a few weeks. "I lost my job, received those magazines, had my epiphany in New York and attended that seminar. It all came together and I decided to buy a bag of briar, get a new lathe and start making pipes again. I'd been searching all this time for something artistic and creative to do for a living. It had been there all along, but for some reason I hadn't seen it."

But would people remember him? Would the people who didn't remember him like the techniques that had been popular six years before? Would he crash and burn, fail miserably and end up as the french-fry guy at McDonald's? "I had to try it," he says. "I needed an artistic outlet. I think of myself as an artist more than a craftsman. I've spoken with se-

eral friends about this, and we all agree I'm strange enough to be an artist."

He needn't have worried. Roush pipes had maintained a high value in the collector community, and when new ones appeared, they were quickly bought. "I started back with the next consecutive number, right where I'd left off," he says. "My first new pipe was number 395, and I've had no trouble since returning. I love my job, though I shouldn't call it a job. It's play, and I happen to get paid for it. People ask how I can stand to work all the hours I do, and I tell them it's not work, it's play. I've got a nice shop behind my house where I can make pipes. I can smoke a pipe out there, listen to music, I've got my tea and I'm making all this cool stuff that people around the world seem to genuinely appreciate. How can you call that work?"

Roush has improved on his pipes, always trying to get closer to perfection. Perfection is impossible, of course, but always trying for it is very rewarding. "I'm doing my best work now, and I like to think it keeps getting better. I used to use blanks for my mouthpieces, and when I started over I started again with blanks, but I wanted to do some different things and started thinking about ebonite and where I wanted to be in the market. Well, to be in that top echelon you have to hand-cut mouthpieces, so that's what I started doing. And with that I was able to use Delrin tenons, which is a nice touch. I remember the first mouthpiece I hand-cut. I made some mistakes, but kept at it. I remember saying, My God, what have I gotten into here. A hand-cut mouthpiece is as much work as the pipe. But I think that at this level and this price, you should expect a hand-cut mouthpiece, and I think that hand-cut mouthpieces add enough quality to the pipe to be well worth the effort."

His experience with jewelry-making helped Roush learn the importance of finishing techniques. "You have to sand it down fine before taking it to the buffing wheel," he says, "because if you think the wheel is going to get rid of scratches, you're mistaken, you'll only end up with shiny scratches. It will enhance the scratches many times, especially in metal. If you leave a little scratch and try to take it out with the wheel—if you're really good and lucky and it's in the right place, you can actually remove a scratch without changing the surface too much, but most of the time what you end with is a bigger scratch or a divot, or ripples, and that's the problem you end up with a lot of times with mouthpieces. So I've learned the hard way, take it down to 1500, then take it to the wheel. Many times I'll be final-polishing and notice a little scratch, and I'll have to take it back to the paper. When you're on the wheel, it's a pain in the neck to take it back to the sandpaper, then you have to gradually work your way up again. You can't remove scratches with 1500, forget it. You can't remove scratches with 1200. If the scratch is minor enough, you can get it with 320 or 400, but then you have to work up to 1500 again and polish it all over again. So I try my best to get it sanded properly before taking it to the wheel. You can't cut corners."

That attention to detail defines Roush pipes. All internal surfaces, starting with 2001 production, are polished. "All my chamfers are polished—chamfer in the mortise, cham-

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	8	$550
	9	$600
	10	$700
SPECIAL		
Grade	L1	$400 - $500
	L2	$550 - $650
	L3	$700 - $850
	L4	$900 - $1,100
	L5	$1,200 - $1,500
SMOOTH		
Grade	R	$750
	O	$950
	U	$1,150
	S	$1,500
	H	Priced Independently
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Grade	S1	$450
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"297" designates an uncommonly large piece graded accordingly. Solid 14k gold band will start at $90 added to the grade price. "TIFFANY" will designate a ladies pipe. The "SPECIAL" grade is used for special pieces of unique design or unusual characteristics.

fer in the tenon—the shank end is polished, face of the mouthpiece is polished, and it's something that is only seen if you take it apart, and some people never take their pipe apart. But if you do take it apart, and see how smooth and shiny it is, it's impressive. It takes a lot of time to do that. But it has to be done, there's no other choice, unless I was just interested in making a pipe fast, which I'm not."

Roush makes 15 to 20 pipes a month, with the average pipe taking five to six hours, not including roughing out and curing. Rusticated or sandblasted pipes take longer. "Blasting always involves something different," he says. "Some blast fast, some blast slow, some you have to wrestle with and others you need to know when to give up. Some have potential, but it takes quite a bit to get it out of it. Smooth is the same thing, shaping it and smoothing it—when you take it to 1500 grit sandpaper, that requires a lot of muscle."

Stem materials include ebonite, Cumberland and Bakelite. "I was lucky to run into a source for Bakelite," he says. "I was always looking for a light-colored material, something off-white. And I found Bakelite and fell in love with it immediately. I've had people ask me for the source, but I bought all they had. As far as I know, there isn't any more, it's gone forever. The ebonite is high quality from Germany. I sand it down to 1500 grit then hit it with three compounds after that on the buffer, so it's very smooth, and the more smooth it is, the less opportunity there is for oxidation because there's less surface area."

Most Roush pipes—around 98 percent—have original Roush metalwork on them. A few of the early pieces included different manufactured fancy design wire, but that is no longer the case, so anytime you see a design in the band these days, that's all work he has done himself. "I cut all the little leaves out, set stones, nothing is plated, it's all solid." The logos are solid silver as well. The Roush logo was influenced by Ser Jacopo's silver ring with a coral insert. "I thought that was the coolest logo there ever was," says Roush. "I could have duplicated it, changed colors or something, but you can't do that, that isn't right. So I just thought about it and tried some different things. It's the first logo I came up with and I never changed it. I used to try different colors in the center to try to match the stain, but I wasn't happy with it."

Roush pipes have been numbered consecutively almost from the very beginning, and as this article is being written, have reached into the mid-900s. "I started numbering the pipes with my first dozen, and I kept those. Number 13 I gave away, it was the first pipe available on the market." Each pipe is stamped with the year of manufacture as well. This consistency in nomenclature makes it easy for collectors to know exactly where a particular pipe falls in the Roush canon.

Besides beauty, extraordinary finishing, original design and hand-tooled metalwork, Roush pipes are recognizable for their smoking quality, something that Roush attributes to his seven-day proprietary curing process. "That was the first step and probably the most important process I developed when I was learning to make pipes," he says. "Butera gave me some guidance, but I had to develop it myself and it took several months. I didn't start selling pipes until I had that right. First I got them smoking right, then worked on everything else."

Another aspect is the bowl coating, which is part of every pipe. "Some people might say that the only reason to coat a pipe is to hide something, but that's not necessarily the case," says Roush. "I coat pipes because it's part of my process. Some people don't like coatings. I've been asked to leave it out on occasion, but I always put it in. It's perfectly neutral. It's not water glass, which I don't care for, personally. You can eat my coating, it's all natural, nothing toxic. Pharmaceutical grade carbon is part of it. My coating is not hiding anything and I believe it helps quite a bit."

Each step in the manufacture of a Roush pipe is carefully considered. Many smokers may not even notice some of the details, but for Larry Roush, each step is imperative for the quality that he has dedicated himself to. "My philosophy," he says, "is that I don't want to sell you one pipe—I want to sell you pipes for the rest of your life. I don't care how many, but I want you to be happy enough to come back for another whenever you're ready. I make every pipe like it's going to be someone's first Roush, because chances are it is. My whole reputation is riding on that one pipe. There's no room for imperfection. There's no such thing as close enough." *P&T*

Roush pipes are available through the Roush Web site, www.roushpipes.com, *or by writing to Larry Roush, 941 Louisiana Ave., Perrysburg, OH 43551.*

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Containers for Commoners, Caches for Kings

The history of early tobacco containers reveals an interesting evolution of materials, from pig bladders to porcelain

by Cyndi Gage and Tad Gage

Riddle: What single product links the first vending machine, the pharmacy, the invention of the match, mass production of the briar pipe, and the discovery of kaolin clay by Europeans? If you weren't reading *Pipes & tobaccos* magazine, you might well go insane before coming up with the answer. But since you're reading this esteemed publication, you might venture a wild guess and come up with the correct answer: pipe tobacco.

This is a story about the fascinating parallels between the growth of pipe tobacco use in Europe and the evolution of containers to hold that tobacco. Right upfront, we'll explain our riddle, but you have to read this article to get the entire equation. Simple logic would dictate that when you have pipe tobacco, you must have somewhere to put it. But the story isn't quite that simple. So here are the quick answers to our riddle, and then we'll weave our story.

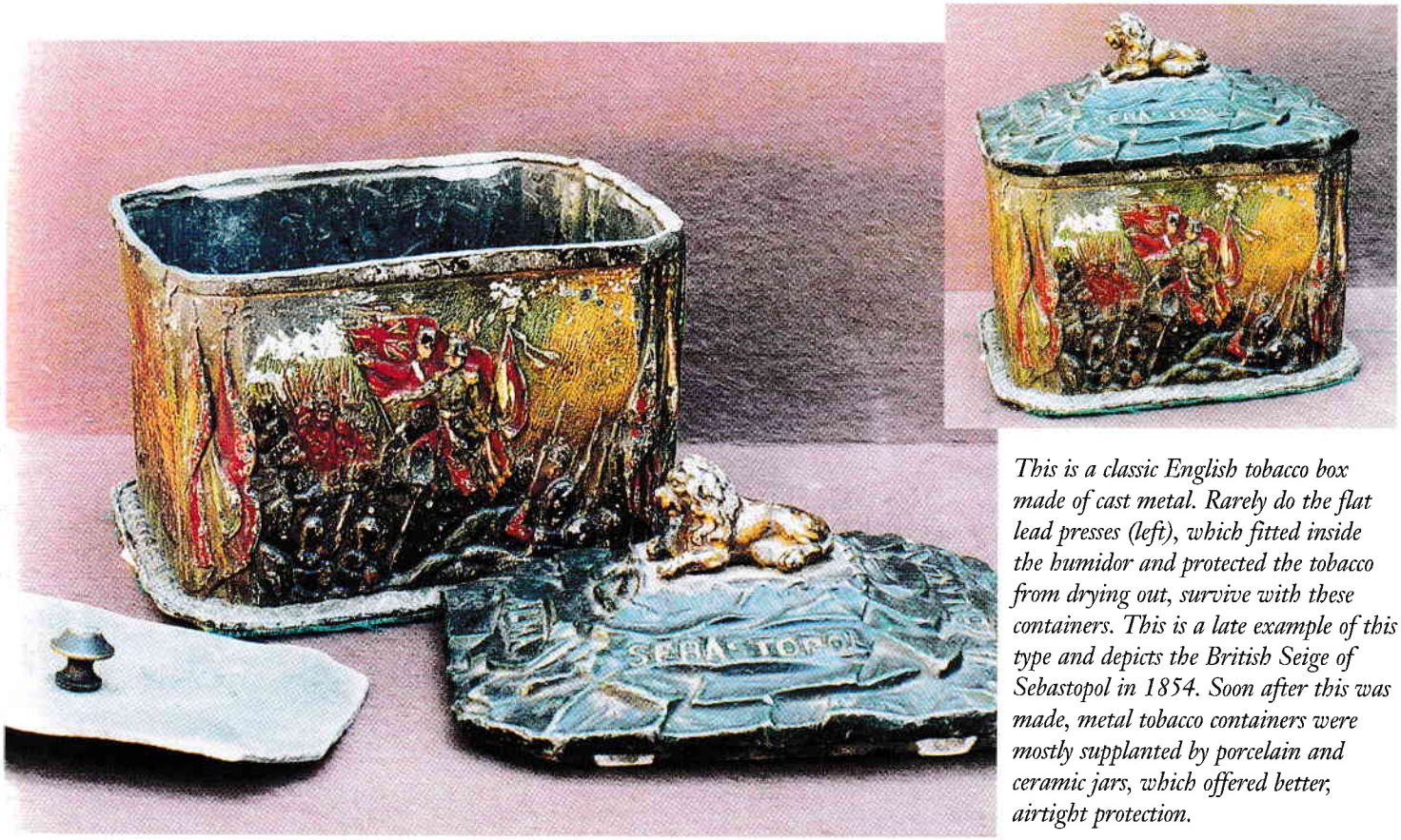
The first vending machine appeared in 1615 and was used to dispense a bowlful of pipe tobacco to the appreciative masses at public houses throughout Europe. At one time, tobacco was apparently readily available at pharmacies. The invention of the match in the early 1800s made it far easier for a legion of smokers to enjoy a pipe without the fuss and bother of using a tong and a hot coal to light a pipe, encouraging more people to smoke pipes. The discovery in the mid-1800s that briar was a cheap, durable and excellent material for making pipes further popularized pipe smoking. Finally, Europeans' eventual success in identifying the formula for turning kaolin clay into porcelain helped unleash a manufacturing boon that made it possible for even the poorest pipe smoker to own a lovely container in which to store his weed.

Many of you may remember Cyndi's article, "The Art of the Pipe Tobacco Humidor," in the Summer 2001 issue of *P&T*, which discussed the pleasure of collecting fine tobacco jars and humidors. While preparing a talk for the 2003 Chicago Pipe Collectors Club annual show, we delved backward into the history of how the humidor evolved. We dug through some fairly obscure tomes, and in the process, we discovered some very interesting parallels among the evolutions of tobacco, pipes, and fine ceramics. Some of our conclusions are speculative; they may even be wrong. But it makes for interesting conjecture.

For as long as there has been tobacco, there has been a need to store and preserve it. More than mere functional storage, tobacco pouches, jars and humidors throughout history have been special containers made of special materials, wrought with extra care and craftsmanship. This makes sense because tobacco has frequently been rare and costly. Whatever its price or availability, it has always been cherished by its users.

When Europeans first stumbled into the New World beginning in the late 1400s, they immediately discovered the weed that was enjoyed by North American and Central American natives. As used by American Indians, tobacco was a relatively uncultivated, scrawny plant. The taste was hot and peppery. Even so, it was often considered imbued with magical and restorative powers, and so native users created special animal skin pouches to hold their dried, cured tobacco (such as it was before the days of cultivation). The storage of tobacco in so-called primitive cultures is an interesting study in itself, but beyond the scope of our knowledge. So let's pick up the story after the first European explorers "discovered" tobacco in the New World. Explorers took tobacco back to Europe in small quantities, and most certainly experimented with smoking pipes and rolled leaf, imitating the native populations they had observed.

In *The Book of Pipes & Tobacco* by Carl Ehwa, we found a reference that by 1528, European sailors were keeping tobacco in pig bladders to take home from the New World. It was among the best watertight containers available, and represents an interesting bridge between the typical animal skin containers used by American Indians



This is a classic English tobacco box made of cast metal. Rarely do the flat lead presses (left), which fitted inside the humidor and protected the tobacco from drying out, survive with these containers. This is a late example of this type and depicts the British Seige of Sebastopol in 1854. Soon after this was made, metal tobacco containers were mostly supplanted by porcelain and ceramic jars, which offered better, airtight protection.

and the eventual development of wood, metal and ceramic containers in Europe.

In 1554, only 60 years after Columbus landed, there is the first account of tobacco seed being planted in a Belgian garden. This was probably typical of horticultural experimentation, because tobacco growing in Europe remained localized and never became widespread. Tobacco was grown on a small scale throughout Europe, but its quality was apparently inferior.

However, on the eastern seaboard of "the Colonies," English settlers were busy cultivating the weed for more robust growth and better taste, while also perfecting curing techniques. The delivery of small quantities of tobacco to Europe was whetting the appetite for the weed. A growing demand for tobacco in Europe spurred farm-scale cultivation, and the first major production tobacco arrived in England in 1565 from the New World colonies.

The increasing supply of pipe tobacco in Europe drove the development of clay pipes, which became the rage in England and Holland by the late 1590s. Of course, you had to have some place to store the delicate leaf, and decorative, functional containers to hold tobacco started to appear in England and Holland.

Some of the earliest tobacco containers in Europe were not for personal storage of tobacco, but for storage in apothecary stores along with other homeopathic herbs and potions. Among natives of the Americas, tobacco was used for medicinal and magical purposes. It carried that reputation to Europe, and so when tobacco was first introduced in Europe, it was touted to have great medicinal purposes; this explains how it ended up in pharmacies and why at least some early tobacco jars looked just like apothecary jars. Many of these ceramic apothecary jars were tin-glazed with a creamy white base and decorated with blue highlights. This familiar look remained a popular theme, and most pipe smokers would recognize the well-known Delft blue-and-white tobacco jar.

In 1610, famed author Ben Johnson penned a poem about his neighborhood apothecary shop owner/tobacconist, a man named Able Drugger. Johnson makes it clear that Drugger carefully stored his merchandise tobacco in ceramic containers, which were more sanitary and retained moisture better than wood or metal containers. Visualize an old apothecary store, with its walls lined with jars of every medicine and medicament. It's not much different from the tobacco shops you've visited, with its walls lined with jars of savory store blend and tins of fine weed. Tobacco shops probably represent an evolutionary branch of the pharmaceutical profession, with tobacconists blending their potions using as much care and skill as the chemists of old.

In *The Alchemist*, Johnson writes of his fine and reputable pharmacist cum tobacconist: "He lets me have good tobacco, and he does not / Sophisticate it with sack-lees, or oil, / Nor washes it in muscadel, and grains, / Nor buries it in gravel underground, / Wrapped up in greasy leather, or pissed clouts; But keeps it in fine lily pots, that opened, / Smell like conserve of roses, or French beans. / He has his maple block, his silver tongs; / Winchester pipes and fire of juniper. / A neat, spruce-honest-fellow, and no goldsmith."

Our hunt for the origin of tobacco jars in Europe led us to another interesting reference that helps cement the connection between pipe tobacco, tobacco jars, and apothecary stores as the forerunner of today's tobacco shops. We found this reference in an obscure, out-of-print book on apothecary jars.

It seems that one common pictorial theme on English delft apothecary jars of the 1600s is an image called the pipe-smoking man. It's almost a decorative element, and the author, an expert in apothecary stores, never seemed to make the obvious connection between tobacco's use as a remedy for various ills and its presence in apothecary shops. Our educated

guess is that jars with the picture of a pipe-smoking man held tobacco, or as it was often called then, nicotiana.

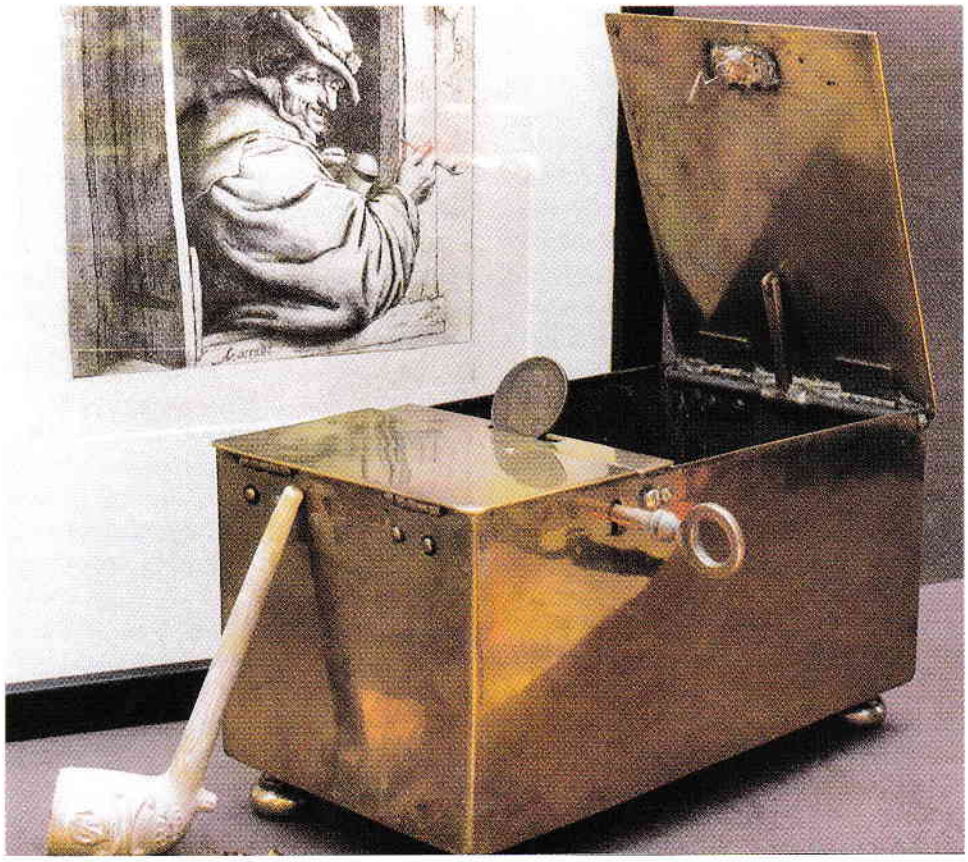
Another form of by-the-bowl dispensing of the still rare and expensive leaf is seen in the emergence of the honor box, another type of tobacco container. Those who couldn't afford their own supply could, by this time, go to a pub and buy it by the bowl. In some cases, public houses provided honor boxes. These were usually brass or metal boxes. They were usually rectangular and had a lid hinged in the middle.

On the lid of one side was a slot for inserting a coin, which dropped into a box below. This lid, of course, locked so no one could pilfer the coins held inside. A buyer would put a coin of the realm into the slot, and the other half of the lid would pop open to reveal a cache of pipe tobacco, from which you could fill your bowl. Some claim the tobacco honor box was the first vending machine. So think of the tobacco honor box the next time you buy a soda or a bag of cookies from a vending machine.

Lavish personal use of tobacco for smoking was impeded until the mid-1600s by two major factors. First, tobacco was still a rare and pricey commodity, on par with tea and spices from the Orient. Second, numerous royal edicts in various countries limited or outright banned the use of tobacco, or imposed onerous taxes on it.

By the mid-1600s, royalty's recognition of tobacco as a tremendous economic and tax boon led to general reductions in prohibitive taxation, and royal bans on tobacco gradually disappeared. Noted English tobacco-hater James I, author of *Counterblaste to Tobacco*, died in 1625. As a growing volume of tobacco made its way to Europe in earnest from the English colonies in America, the English also put their talents to work in making metal boxes to hold tobacco. As opposed to the earthenware apothecary jars, these lead, pewter, brass, silver, painted iron, and pot metal boxes were mostly used for personal tobacco storage. Some wooden containers were also carved, although they were not particularly effective at keeping tobacco from drying out.

Metal containers were often constructed with a heavy lead press that fit snugly inside the tobacco box and probably did a decent job of keeping air from drying out the tobacco, particularly in the more humid climates of northern Europe. We were able to trace the origins of these early decorative pipe tobacco containers for personal use to the 1580s. Reginald Myer confirms this point in his out-of-print book, *Chats on Old English Tobacco Jars*. The appearance of the first containers for storing personal stashes coincides nicely in time with the increasing number of tobacco shipments from both English and Dutch colonies.



The fellow in this etching may have dipped his clay pipe into an honor box such as the one shown. Possibly the world's first vending machines, honor boxes were found in public houses (pubs) for the convenience of smokers there. When a coin was deposited in the slot, the lid would spring open, allowing access to the tobacco for filling a pipe.

These boxes held a reasonably large amount of tobacco—up to a pound. We speculate that the relatively large volume of these early containers, which originated primarily in England and to a lesser degree in Holland, indicates that tobacco in England and Holland was mostly used for the lavish habits of tobacco chewing and smoking.

The English were cultivating large amounts of tobacco in America in the mid- to late-1600s. The Dutch had successfully transplanted tobacco to their heavy colonial holdings in the West Indies and the Far East. So tobacco was relatively available for wealthy folks in these two European nations. Their explorers had landed in the right places.

Contrast this abundance of tobacco in England and Holland with the lack of it in France and Germany in the 1600s and 1700s. The French and Germans had colonies in places such as equatorial Africa and southeast Asia, places where the climate for growing pipe tobacco was not optimal. This may partially explain the strong French and German preference for snuffing, in which a little powdered Virginia tobacco goes a long way.

It is no surprise to us that Germany and France are the two countries that created the vast majority of snuff containers in the 17th and 18th centuries. Spain had colonial holdings in tobacco-growing areas, of course, but the strong Spanish preference for cigars is indicated by a virtual absence of Spanish manufacturing of tobacco jars during these centuries.

By the mid-1700s, as a result of free trade, tobacco was becoming more widely available throughout Europe. Germany and Austria started to pick up on the pipe-smoking craze, but it wasn't until the discovery of the formula for porcelain that German and French makers kicked into a higher gear and started making tobacco containers. Around 1720, Europeans finally discovered the secret to making porcelain—a white mineral-rich clay called kaolin. For centuries, the secret of turning kaolin into porcelain had been closely guarded by the Chinese, but Europeans finally unlocked the secret. ▶

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Immediately after Europeans started mining and processing kaolin, which is available throughout Europe, the manufacture of fine ceramics exploded. Manufacturers such as Sévres in France and Meissen in Germany capitalized on the tobacco-using public by offering such items as tobacco pots, tobacco jars, snuffboxes, ashtrays and spittoons, which ranged in price from the very modest to the near-unreachable that only the aristocracy could afford.

Meissen further enhanced its bottom line by offering pipe bowls as well as figurines depicting tobacco use and even dinnerware showing smoking scenes. Coinciding with ever-increasing supplies of tobacco and a boon in porcelain and ceramic manufacturing in Germany, the German fondness for pipe smoking took a dramatic upswing.

England was not to be left behind in the making of porcelain and pottery smoking accessories. With the popularity of tobacco use, many porcelain and ceramic factories sprang up in England. Wedgwood was established in the mid-1700s, Copeland in 1770, and Doulton in 1815.

Snuff was still very popular throughout Europe, so elaborate snuffboxes continued to be made. Deborah Gage and Madeleine Marsh, in their book *Tobacco Containers & Accessories*, researched inventory records from various porcelain factories throughout Europe. The records show that by the mid-1700s, both pipe tobacco containers and snuff containers were being made in significant numbers.

J.J. Kandler's daybook, which chronicles the Meissen factory, shows an entry in July 1735 that states: "Finished one large tobacco box (for smoking) complete with cover decorated with numerous reliefs and ornaments. Also made to accompany the box (is) a decorated tray into which the ash may be tipped." With the proliferation of porcelain and ceramics, by the late 1700s, metal tobacco containers were rapidly losing their popularity. Ceramic and pottery containers retain moisture better, and they don't corrode, as many metals do. Owning porcelain also indicated a higher social station in the classes, while owning metal was relegated to the lower stations.

By the early 1800s, tobacco was being grown and freely traded around the world. It was more affordable and accessible, which also encouraged the manufacture of tobacco containers for pipe smokers. Around 1820, pipe smoking and tobacco jar manufacturing were given another shot in the arm with the introduction of cheap and serviceable matches. We didn't get the connection at first. Then it dawned on us—this was a big improvement over having to light your pipe with tongs and a coal. Matches made it easy to light up anywhere, which encouraged smoking, which in turn encouraged increased use and storage of pipe tobacco.

Meerschaum and clay pipes, and the discovery of briar as a cheap and serviceable pipe material, further popularized pipe smoking. So now we have a wonderful confluence in time of increasingly affordable tobacco, sturdy and affordable smoking instruments, matches, and ceramic jars that were truly effective in maintaining the moisture content of pipe tobacco.

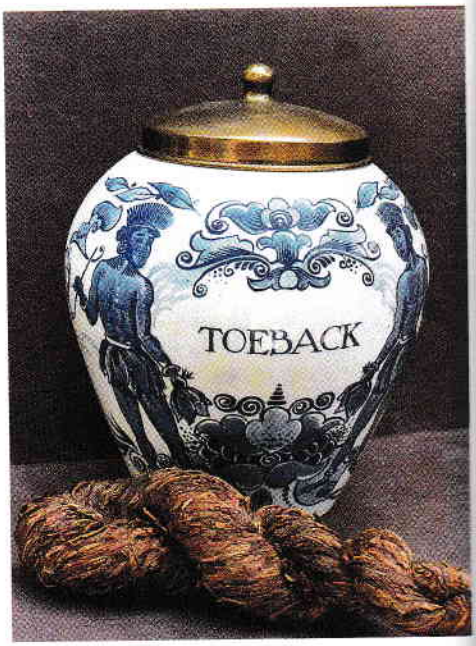
All these factors kicked off the age of the artistic pipe tobacco container. There were enough smokers for ceramic, glass and metal factories to dedicate at least a small amount of production time to making tobacco jars. Manufacturers around the world created millions of tobacco jars and humidors to satisfy a seemingly insatiable demand for pipe tobacco containers. Glass never seems to have been a popular tobacco jar material, unless it was opaque—we guess this is because nobody wanted to look at a lump of pipe tobacco sitting on a table in the living room.

Sometime in the mid-1800s—we're not sure when, exactly—somebody got the idea of adding a hole in the lid to hold a piece of wet sponge or wool to keep the tobacco in the jar moist. This was certainly more effective than plunking a slice of apple or any damp item directly into the tobacco, because these tended to mold and rot, fouling the tobacco. Combining this moisture-providing system with the airtight properties of ceramic and porcelain finally gave smokers a moist, controlled environment for their pipe tobacco!

Tobacco jars, as containers in which to store the leaf, became an integral part of the pipe smoker's ritual—along with the pipe, the tobacco, and the matches. More than mere containers, tobacco jars gained a reverence that nearly rivaled the reverence a smoker had for his favorite pipe.

In *Chats on Old English Tobacco Jars*, Myer quotes H.M. Tomlinson's characters from *All Our Yesterdays* (1930). Picture two old English chaps sitting in their leather chairs in front of a roaring fire, each with his favorite mixture smoldering away in a well-loved briar pipe in one hand and a snifter of brandy in the other.

One gentleman, Talbot, says to the other, "You think we shall bear in mind the taste of old Jones' mixture when we are up above?"



When introduced to Europe in the 1500s, tobacco was thought to have curative powers and was frequently sold in apothecary shops. The classic Dutch-made Gouda tobacco jar is a direct descendent of the jars of herbs and medicines found in these early drugstores, where rows of similar blue-and-white jars, individually decorated and labeled, would line the walls. Accompanying this jar is an early example of twist tobacco.

His friend responds, "We haven't forgotten it so far. There's a bare chance. And those antique jars in which he used to keep the stuff, cabalistic lettering and all! I suspect that lettering—it was art magic!" And Talbot sighs, "Ah yes, those jars, those jars. Where are they? Do you think good jars have souls? I see them now. Jolly good brown, gold and black they were—full round tummies on slender feet ... and the smell of them!" His friend says, "Yes—they could put heart into you with that. Better the memory of them than—well, much else."

Sir Walter Raleigh summed up the special role of the tobacco jar pretty well. His wooden tobacco box, which kept him company during the years he was imprisoned in the Tower of London before his execution in 1618, had carved into it the Latin phrase, "It was my comfort in those miserable times."

Even in good times, scooping a bowlful of one's favorite tobacco from a cherished jar can, indeed, be a comfort. And now, with our modest detective effort, we have revealed a greater understanding of the marvelous, almost magical development of pipes, tobacco and the containers that hold this special weed. *P&T*

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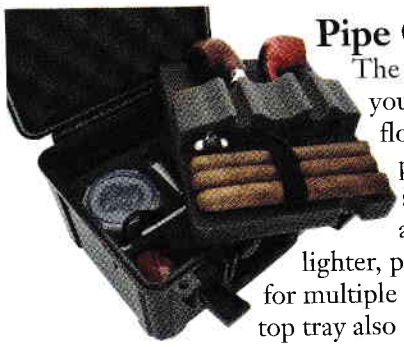

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The Pipe Guardian offers complete travel protection for your pipes. Pipe Guardian is a waterproof, crushproof, floatable and easily portable case that will protect your pipes in the harshest conditions—rain, snow, dirt, sand, humidity, impact and shock. The Pipe Guardian allows you to safely carry six pipes, a tamper, a pipe lighter, pipe cleaners and tobacco. Its two-layer design allows for multiple combinations of pipes, cigars and accessories and the top tray also can be used as a pipe stand.

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Fairchild Pipes

Working from his shop located in Houston, Texas, Ron Fairchild has been making pipes since 1978. Using only the finest Grecian briar, Fairchild makes about 100 pipes every year. Fairchild pipes are available by visiting *www.angelfire.com/biz4/fairchildpipes/* or by ordering them from Tony Sanchez at Santa Fe Pipes at 137 D W. San Francisco, Santa Fe, NM 87501; phone: 800.734.7017; Web site: *www.santafepipes.com*.

Bonfiglioli Christmas Pipe

Every year Bolognese pipemaker Alberto Bonfiglioli carves an extremely limited edition series of Christmas pipes that feature exquisite silver adornments. To order a Bonfiglioli Christmas pipe, contact Bonfiglioli at 8/A Bertiera St., Italy 40126; phone: 39.051.23.17.71; e-mail: *tid0826@iperbole.bologna.it*; Web site; *www.bonfigliolipipe.it*.

Design Berlin

Design Berlin pipes are made in Germany. Handmade from Grecian briar, Design Berlin pipes feature elegant designs and features.

Design Berlin pipes are available nationwide. To locate your nearest Design Berlin dealer, contact James Norman Ltd. at 218-A South Van Brunt St., Englewood, NJ 07631; phone: 800.525.5629; fax: 201.227.1642; e-mail: *jamesnormanltd.aol.com*.

Former Pipe Tobacco

Denmark pipe master Hans Nielsen, better known as Former, has introduced two new tobaccos—Former's Private Blend and Former's Private Flake. These pipe tobaccos feature a blend of tobaccos from around the world. Available in 100-gram and 50-gram tins, Former's Private Blend tobaccos may be purchased at tobacconists nationwide. To locate a retailer near you, contact F&K Cigar Co. at 9420 Page Ave., St. Louis, MO 63132; phone: 800.848.1480; fax: 314.423.2073; Web site: *www.fkcigar.com*; e-mail: *gezvan@fkcigar.com*.

Pirates Cove and Gold Coin Buccaneer

Pirates Cove tobacco features a blend of cube-cut Burley and Virginia tobaccos with a full-bodied and rich taste. Gold Coin Buccaneer highlights blond Cavendish tobaccos with a subtle, delicate vanilla flavoring.

For more information, contact FGT Enterprises at 9430 Lazy Lane, Tampa, FL 33614; phone: 800.783.3481; fax: 813.935.5804; e-mail: *fgtent@mindspring.com*.

Kaywoodie Pipe of the Year

S.M. Frank Co. introduces the Kaywoodie 2004 Pipe of the Year, the fifth shape in the series. The pipes are made from Grecian plateau briar, with black Lucite push stems. The 7.5-inch-long Canadian is available in five finishes: smooth natural, smooth walnut, tan sandblast, dark sandblast and rusticated. Only 100 pipes are made each year in the Pipe of the Year series. These special Kaywoodie pipes are available at a limited number of tobacconists. To locate a retailer near you, contact S.M. Frank Co. at P.O. Box 789, Peekskill, NY 10566: phone 800.431.2752; e-mail: *smfrankco@aol.com*; Web site: *www.smfrankcoinc.com*.

Savinelli Pipes

Savinelli's Premier Set is available in four colors—blue, green, black and walnut—and features either a straight or bent pipe. The set also includes a leather carrying case, pipe tool, pipe cleaners, 20 balsa filters and a set of instructions for beginners.

Savinelli's Punto Oro Fumee pipe features a genuine amber mouthpiece with an 18-carat-gold band. The pipe also comes with a second acrylic mouthpiece.

Savinelli pipes are available at retailers across the country. To locate a Savinelli dealer near you, contact the company at 1002 Morrisville Parkway, P.O. Box 526, Morrisville, NC 27560; phone: 919.481.0511; fax: 919.481.1948; e-mail: *savinelli@mindspring.com*; Web site: *www.savinelliusa.com*.

New Dunhill Pipes

Dunhill's quaint Tomato is an unusual squat shape that fits particularly well in the hand. It's available in the Group Four size in all finishes.

The Crosby features an uncommon shape that's a hybrid of the Billiard and Canadian shapes by combining a long stem and a long shank. Dunhill's Crosby pipes are accented with sterling silver bands.

Both the Tomato and Crosby pipes are produced in limited quantities. They are available nationwide. To contact a White Spot retailer near you, contact Music City Marketing at 477 McNally Dr., Nashville, TN 37211; phone: 800.251.3016; fax: 615.832.0785; e-mail: *custserv@musiccitymarketing.com*; Web site: *www.musiccitymarketing.com*.

Bohemian Scandal

Bohemian Scandal is the latest in the G.L. Pease range of pipe tobaccos. Nearly a year in development, this traditional Balkan-style mixture features Syrian Latakia, fine Virginias and Oriental tobaccos. Bohemian Scandal is available in 2-oz. and 8-oz. tins. For more information, visit *www.glpease.com*. G. L. Pease tobaccos are manufactured and distributed by Cornell & Diehl, 800.433.0080.

TRIAL BY FIRE

by William Serad and Tad Gage

In this issue, William Serad and Tad Gage assess some tobaccos in three different categories. First, some old, well-known blends that have been mainstays for many of us through the decades, including Escudo, Edgeworth and the often (perhaps unfairly) maligned Erinmore. A few blends from W.Ø. Larsen, that fine old company in Denmark, are also tested. Finally, both reviewers provide introductions to something new to the market: Syrian Latakia. Unavailable for years, Syrian is making a comeback and possesses qualities distinct from its Cyprian cousin. Four Syrian blends from McClelland are offered here, while Syrian blends from other companies (including Cornell & Diehl and G.L. Pease) will be included in our next issue.

Old Traditionals

Escudo

Serad: I smoked the English ancestors, indeed I did. I had a special love for this special blend. Now transported to Denmark, this unique multinational roll cake of Virginias and Perique with the Spanish name is widely available again. Popping the tin gives that tangy, acidic aroma way beyond even that of a McClelland matured Virginia. The "coins" are varied in color, fairly dark to very pale, my sample wrapped in some of the reddest leaf I have ever seen and about the size of half-dollars (larger than Mac Baren roll cakes). This is a "Navy deluxe," which would imply rum to me, but none is detectible (nor was there ever). There seem to be many definitions of a Navy blend, and here is yet another. It is stiff and brittle to rub out, but not without moisture. In fact, you will be gurgling later on. There will be the inevitable comparisons to the original, so I will make one. This looks familiar, but it does not taste familiar. This is not to say that it is bad, but it's not the Escudo of yesteryear. It was, in my memory, provokable to a bit of heat, but overwhelmingly full of flavor, the flavors one would expect: sweet, deep Virginias and a significant note of Perique. It got better and better down the bowl, and moved with a ponderous grace. This new incarnation does indeed improve down the bowl, but it does not start from the same place. Heat is the most notable characteristic at the onset of the flame, and flavor is not. For a while, a kind of sooty, tasteless Virginia effect issues from the pipe after the minor struggle of loading the bowl. If you get through the first third without knocking it out, the flavor finally arrives, and it is good flavor. By the very end, there is a slight harshness evident, but not a great deal. Even the temperature control issue is resolved, and your pipe becomes your friend again and not someone irritatingly nagging you. You should try this, and perhaps my issues may not bother you—perhaps they are just mine alone, induced by memories of blissful bygone bowls. Sweet memories become sweeter with time, and present reality is predisposed to fail by unfavorable comparison with mnemonic ideals. Such is life, and such is tobacco.

Gage: This is a re-creation of the beloved Cope's Escudo, and is a real blast from the past for today's pipe smoker. Resurrected by Alfred & Christian Petersen in 1999, this tobacco is a rare example of a true Navy cut: silver-dollar-sized discs of spun tobaccos. The Navy cut got its name because sailors would roll their tobacco leaves into a cylinder, then tie it with string. They would slice off discs for smoking or chewing. This spun cut tobacco features fine Virginia tobaccos and a healthy dose of Perique that adds a rich peppery flavor. Some smokers break up the discs, while others fold a couple of discs to line the bowl, then sprinkle in some broken flake to promote burning. Either way, Escudo delivers tons of character—a dry and earthy flavor with hints of leather. Given a few years of aging, the Virginia tobaccos in Escudo will probably sweeten a bit and add even more character, but it's ready to simply buy and smoke. The room aroma is assertive and similar to a moderately pungent cigar.

Escudo burns clean and even, albeit just a bit wet, and smokes well in pipes of any size. Great in briar and meerschaum, Escudo was especially fun to smoke in my clay churchwarden. Clays bring out the earthy, dry qualities of this splendid re-creation. You can almost imagine yourself relaxing in a turn-of-the-century English pub with a pint of ale—which, by the way, goes well with Escudo.

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Edgeworth Sliced

Serad: Thought by some to have disap-

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peared, Edgeworth Sliced is still made in England (or the EU according to the tin) under license to the successors of the House of Edgeworth. The Edgeworth ready-rubbed is still made in the U.S. Opening the tin exposes the broad edge of the slices, and they are a velvety swirl of light to dark brown, reflecting the unique composition of one of the only Burley flakes around. The tin aroma is rich and heady, with none of the ping of the Virginia flakes, having a cork-and-wine aroma, or, dare I say it, like that of tobacco. Rubbing it out leaves some of the exquisite oils on the fingers. An easy light for the form and cut brings big, round flavor at the low end of the spectrum, broad as no Virginia flake can be. No high note, nor lightness either, with hints of cigar, chocolate, and all those other analogs one uses to describe real tobacco flavor. This is as cool as only a low-sugar Burley can be. Exceptional, as it always has been, and as it always will be (I hope). Highly recommended.

Gage: Edgeworth is a storied blend, created by the Larus & Brother Co. of Richmond, Virginia. It was adored by millions and consumed in massive quantities over many decades. Traditionally, Edgeworth slices featured Burley and Virginia tobaccos flavored with a molasses-like casing in the tradition of rum-soaked Navy flakes. Today's Edgeworth Sliced, created by Lane Limited under license from the successors of the House of Edgeworth, remains Burley-based. The wide slices are mottled with Virginia tobaccos and reflect care in selection, aging and manufacturing. Once rubbed out and packed in the pipe, it lights well and features woody overtones of cherry and oak. I tasted a spiciness that became more pronounced in the second half of the bowl. It smoked best when packed loosely and smoked slowly. However, I was definitely missing something. Thanks to the generosity of fellow pipester Brad Berard, who presented me with a very old tin of original Edgeworth, I refreshed my memory in yet another one of those unfair comparisons of grandpa and grandson. I rehydrated the old, deep brown flakes. While the old Edgeworth tins advertised; "Save this tin, it has many handy uses," one of those uses is not keeping the tobacco moist after 40 years. Factoring out as best I could the changes that age has on tobacco, the old Edgeworth flakes reeked of molasses in smell and in smoking, and that's what was missing in today's blend. Today's Edgeworth may actually be a more complex Burley blend than the original. It may, in fact, be one of the best Burley blends around. While it's a fine tobacco, it's quite different from the original.

• • •

Erinmore Flake

Serad: I have an admission to make. Every few years, I have a wild urge to smoke Erinmore Flake. I have no idea why, and offer no explanation. This is not something that actually appeals to me, so there you have it. Erinmore Flake is thin-sliced, and exceptionally dark, moist flake. It rubs out well, and lights easily with flumes of smoke. *Unique* is an overused word, and I have certainly used it more than I should in the column, but the flavoring here is quite unique in the world of tobacco, probably in other worlds, too. It gives the impression of sweetness, but it is not nearly as sweet as most German and Danish blends, thus more natural than added. The flavoring—which I think has nothing to do with the pineapple on the label (a sign of hospitality, I believe, in centuries gone by)—is there at the match until the fires are extinguished, and never escapes through sensory fatigue. Smooth and somewhat bland in the tobacco department, the flavoring carries it, so if you don't like it, there is nothing else to like. It is cool and deceptively strong. The aftertaste does not involve the flavoring much at all, and you are left with a dirty-ashtray sort of taste. As it occupies a singular place in the constellation of blends, Erinmore Flake is a must-try at least once in your life.

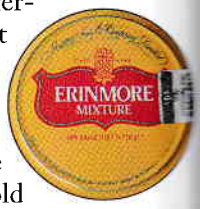
Why I keep coming back with infrequent cyclicality, I don't know, but something draws me, like returning to Brigadoon.

Gage: This is a sliced version of Erinmore, with dark Virginia flakes that should be heavily rubbed out to be easily smoked. Lightly rubbed, I found the flakes to be gloppy and hard to keep lit. The flake appears a bit darker than Mixture, but the flavorings seem identical. There is perhaps a bit less fruit and more chocolate in the nose and taste of the flake, although I'm not sure why the cut should make so much difference. Either loosely or aggressively rubbed out, the flake smoked hot and wet. Trying to dry the tobacco was an exercise in futility. It remained difficult to keep lit and left a plug of dottle. Erinmore Mixture is a much better way to enjoy this antique blend.

• • •

Erinmore Mixture

Serad: This is the unpressed version of the flake, and other than processing, I don't detect much difference. The cut allows it to burn hotter if you are not careful, and the lighter general appearance is reflective of the absence of gum to hold the slices together. That said, my preferences for this are opposite my usual preferences. I like the loose blend better than the slices. It seems to be lighter, sweeter from the leaf and somehow preferable. The general effect is still the same, but as a bowl proceeds, a more natural sweetness develops without more heat, and is just a bit more enjoyable. As with the slices, give this a try at least once in your life. It may hit the mark for your wildly different aromatic fans who want to move on from the big bags of vanilla in the drugstore.



Gage: Not many companies can claim 200 years of history, but Murray, the leading Irish tobacco manufacturer, can

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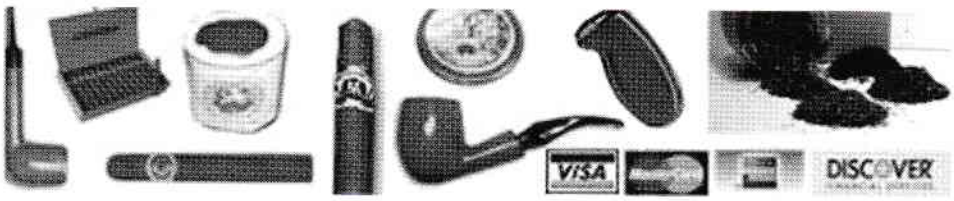

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Erinmore has been around forever, evoking either love or hatred, not much in-between. In the tin, its nose is like berries and whiskey, owing both to the Virginia tobaccos and the herb-like flavorings that have always characterized Erinmore. The predominant flavor element is very much like deer's-tongue, an old-fashioned component made from wild vanilla leaves, with more herbal notes than actual vanilla taste.

This fluffy ribbon-cut mixture packs well, lights well and burns evenly. The Virginias smoke a little hot, so puff slowly. As noted by many smokers, the tobacco leaves a distinct flavor that sticks with your pipe. If you want to try it, I recommend a meerschaum for starters. If you like it and want to enjoy it in a briar, I suggest you set aside a pipe or two dedicated to this blend.

I figured this was the perfect time to open a 30-year-old 2-ounce tin of Erinmore I had in my cellar and do a head-to-head comparison. Such comparisons aren't fair, but they are fun. Today's Erinmore is a chip off the old block. My old Erinmore Mixture was significantly darker and coated with crystallized sugars, the result of the Virginia tobaccos developing with age. The tin aroma of old Erinmore was much fruitier, also the result of aging. The old stuff was rich and delicious, which underscored the positive comparison with the new Erinmore. The folks at Murray know enough not to mess with a classic, which this mixture continues to be.

• • •

Troost Special Cavendish

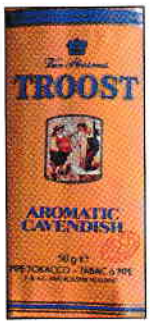
Serad: Unlike their Danish counterparts, the Dutch seem more concerned with tobacco than sugar. That being said, the constituent leaf here is definitely toward the light yet flavorful end of the spectrum. There also seems to be an Oriental component that becomes more apparent along the way, adding some interest and sophistication. The color is generally light-brown and in the typical Cavendish cut. There is a particular aroma in both pouch and room that I associate with Troost, including the flake not reviewed here. The pouch it comes in keeps this quite fresh, and it is bursting with aroma when opened. The most singular characteristic is that it is absolutely cool and even-burning all the time, all the way down, remarkable for any Cavendish. It is almost impossible to push this into being hot, but agitated puffing does bring out a certain bitterness that is not the most pleasant characteristic. A pipe can be put down for quite a while without requiring a relight upon taking it up again. The flavor is the same in any sized pipe, though it is not a slow burn, so bigger pipes are perhaps better. The room note is pleasant and characteristic, and all in all, this is recommended for the Cavendish smoker looking for something less sweet and more like straight leaf. All hail the Dutch. One might think that this is appropriate for the former Amphora smokers out there; but it is not that close to being substitutionary, I think for reasons of the Burley.

Gage: To the eye, this blend is identical to Troost's regular Cavendish. Mild and bland, it danced on the precipice of serious tongue burn. The chocolate aroma in the pouch didn't translate to the taste. I found both Troost blends tough to keep lit without overheating.

• • •

Troost Aromatic Cavendish

Serad: Essentially the same as the Special, the Aromatic is just that, and wildly so. The pouch aroma is huge and nutty and sweet-smelling. The room note is the same as that of the pouch, and would not offend anyone (I would think). The flavor does not reflect the aromatic character and is still mostly tobacco in nature, Troost-like in character, and more sophisticated than sweet. The aromatic agent, while pleasant and a slight addition to the basic flavor, does not add much to the equation. So, for the sake of those around you, you might give the Aromatic a try over the Special, but this is recommended to the same audience. A model Dutch-style blend that others of the sort aspire to emulate.

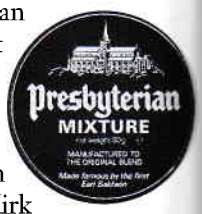


Gage: Once a mainstay of the tobacco market, Dutch pipe tobacco blends are getting tough to find. Troost, from the old firm of J. & A. Van Rossem, is an old and classic blend. Troost's regular Cavendish falls on the lighter side of the Cavendish scale. Flecks of black Cavendish accent mostly lightly steamed and pressed leaf. It features a pleasantly sweet aromatic flavoring, and is a mild, smooth-smoking choice for those who like the nutty-sweet character of Virginia-Burley blends.

• • •

Presbyterian Mixture

Serad: A unique blend today among English blends, this is made from U.S. Virginias and Macedonian Orientals, varietals not often found today. Originally blended before World War I for the Very Rev. Dr. John White of the Barony Kirk in Glasgow, who was also Moderator of the General Assembly in Scotland in 1929, this was brought to public attention by Earl Baldwin, prime minister at various times and a fan of the blend, and the giver of the name. As a Baptist, I was suspicious of a blend named for a questionable church polity, but willing to overlook it for reasons of Calvinist leanings and a predestined affection for Macedonian leaf. Opening the tin, one is met by a plastic bag containing the leaf, a sort of belt-and-suspenders guarantee of moisture. Unfortunately, this is the most moist blend I have tried in years, and it really needs to be dried out, by anyone's standard. The aroma in the tin, however, will bowl over the English lover and the Balkan fan, too. It is simply mouth-watering. The cut, as with many an old blend, is a shag, but the mixing is quite uniform, no mean feat. Regardless of pipe size, the flavor is the same, and even as wet as it comes (I could not wait to dry it out for the first



bowl), it is quite exceptionally cool. It is astoundingly delicious, and the Macedonian makes it a rarity on the market today. Highly recommended, even to Armenians.

Gage: I've never had the occasion to smoke this venerable Balkan blend, a fine-cut mix of Virginia and Macedonian (Oriental) tobaccos. It was unavailable in the United States for many years, and the exact blend as the original was reintroduced by James Norman Ltd. about five years ago at the behest of the many smokers who missed it. Bravo! According to Cem Mukenbrun of James Norman, Presbyterian Mixture shot back up the charts and has become the company's best-selling tinned tobacco. I can see why. Unlike many of today's Oriental mixtures, which tend to consist of chunkier long-cut or whole or broken slices, this is almost a fine-cut. A fine-cut is used in cigarettes for the obvious reason that it burns quickly and easily. Tobacco cut this thinly should be packed loosely and smoked slowly to release the tobaccos' subtle flavors. Packed firmly, it demands strong puffing to stay lit, and it will bite you and taste bland.

There's a lot going on in this blend: bright Virginia tobacco, some brown and reddish Oriental leaf, a dash of Latakia, and probably more. Despite the Virginias, there is no hint of sweetness in the mixture. It carries a typical and delightful "muskiness" that fans of Balkan mixtures crave. Even with careful packing, it's tough to keep Presbyterian Mixture from smoking a little hotter toward the bottom of the bowl. This outstanding mixture is far better in a smaller pipe—totally consistent with a blend created in the 1920s, when nearly everyone smoked smaller pipes. Trying to manage and minimize the oxygen flow in a large-bowl pipe was too much work.

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Blends from W.Ø. Larsen

Larsen's Collector's

Serad: Darker leaf predominates, and the topping is perhaps the most pronounced of all the Larsen blends. This causes it to

nip a bit at the tongue, but that may be worth fending off because of the superior flavor. Keeping the burn low makes this go out with ease; ramping it up guarantees heat. A longer pipe is indicated. Nonetheless, this has a fine flavor and superior room note, making it an aromatic worthy of consideration. The flavorings are light enough for the tobacco to show through; kudos to the blender.

Gage: Debuting from the attractive tin with a smell of chocolate and strawberry, Collector's is a pleasant Danish-style Cavendish. The rubbed-out mixture packs easily and burns well. A dark but not overpowering sweet Cavendish flavor pushes the mild Virginia tobaccos into the background of this blend. Whatever flavorings the tobacco is infused with, they are subtle and difficult to single out. Collector's is a smooth blend and a fine choice if you enjoy an unobtrusive mixture in your pipe.

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Larsen's Old Fashioned

Serad: Definitely tilted toward the bright Virginia component all down the bowl, the leaf gives it a lighter character. This has sweetness from the help of the blender, but it is not cloying. It has various shades of light- to dark-brown leaf, and has an obvious casing. Strangely, the room note is not particularly appealing. It is, however, fairly cool, and nicely done.

Gage: Out of the tin, this predominantly deep-brown mixture had a sweet but not cloying scent. I found it overly moist and tough to light, and it benefited from a couple days of drying. The fact that it did dry slightly indicates a minimum of cas-

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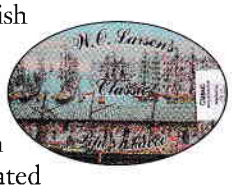
ing that is often used to keep aromatic tobacco artificially moist. Old Fashioned is a broken cake of Virginia and Burley, with no dominant flavor characteristics. But not every blend has to be complex or challenging, and this well-made tobacco is a pleasant, mild smoke at any time of the day.

• • •

Larsen's Classic

Serad: Uniformly medium-brown, rough and ribbon-cut, this has a very tobacco-y tin aroma for a Danish aromatic blend. It burns well, lights easily and stays lit, and only when puffed in an agitated manner does it show any heat. Within this series, this is the least treated with flavors, sweeteners and more unimaginable stuff. It matches the tin aroma and has pretty much a tobacco-only flavor straight up, with just a soupçon of typical Danish treatment that hardly intrudes on the consciousness. This would be good as a way station from Virginia flakes to a quiet vacation in Denmark, or as a stopover moving on to matured Virginias.



Gage: From the get-go, Classic had loads of visual punch and aroma straight out of the tin. It's an attractive ribbon-cut mix of bright yellow and tawny brown Virginia tobaccos, including some roughly broken slices. The nose in the tin promises hints of caramel and vanilla, and delivers those flavors as it's smoked. Larsen describes a Virginia-based mixture that includes tobaccos from Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mexico. I can't guess the leaf, but these warmer climates do tend to produce tobaccos of a hearty character, which may account for the interesting richness. Strips of bright yellow, sugary Virginia tobacco offer a sweet top note. The usual downside of such bright Virginias is that they often smoke hot, but this mixture smokes remarkably cool. Classic fared well in briar pipes, leaving no unpleasant residual smell. I thought it smoked particularly well in meerschaum pipes, whose dryness allowed the subtle flavors to come through. It's nice to find an aromatic that is sweet and aromatic due primarily to the tobaccos, not the top-dressing. Classic is a fine Danish-style tobacco.

• • •

On Syrian Latakia

Serad: Latakia is named for the Syrian town facing Cyprus, Al-Ladhiqiyah. Rather than being a type or leaf, it is produced by smoking particular Oriental leaf above smoldering fires stoked with herbs or certain fragrant woods in a process known as open-fire curing. Legend has it that some of a bumper crop was left unsold, and was hung in the rafters of tents heated by burning camel dung, giving the leaf a unique and fragrant character when taken down next season. The same effect might be achieved today by smoking Old Belt Virginias over fires of late-school-year gym locker contents. Contrary to apocryphal stories, there is no camel dung involved in its manufacture today. It is dark-brown to black depending upon the variety, of which there are principally two: Cyprian and Syrian. For the most part, until recent years, only the Cyprian variety has been available. It is dark and heavy, absolutely magnificent and unmistakable in flavor and exotic aroma. The Smyrna-related leaf for Cyprian Latakia (yellow Cyprus) is smoked over mountain shrubs, small pine trees, myrtle or other related woods, including stem and leaf ribs. Syrian Latakia comes from a different variety of leaf, *shekk-el-bint*, and is smoked over different woods and herbs, chief of which is the Syrian oak. As with Cyprian, stems and ribs are left intact, and even the flowers are included. Unlike with other tobacco leaf, it is thought that the stems and leaf-ribs are the sweetest part of the plant. Syrian is generally lighter in color and smokier in taste than Cyprian, and in fact comes in three grades or varieties, the lightest being most aromatic. This process takes as long as three to four months and produces what the Syrians themselves refer to as *Abourihm*, the king of flavor. I understand that deforestation to get this particular variety of oak brought about the reduction in production, which is only now recovering.

Gage: After a long absence from commercially available blends, Syrian Latakia has reemerged in a few select blends, including the four McClelland examples being reviewed in this issue. For the first time ever, both Cyprian and Syrian Latakia mixtures are available.

Like Cavendish, Latakia is a method of processing tobacco. The base leaf is a Smyrna-like Oriental, created by drying and fumigating the leaves in the presence of smoky wood fires until the tobacco is shriveled and almost black. It's then further aged and processed to create the final product. The type of woods used and the smoke they produce influence the tobacco's flavor as profoundly as the choice of hickory, mesquite, or applewood influences the flavor of barbecued foods. The process originated in Syria, which was for years the only source for top-grade Latakia. The tobacco was also grown in Syria. In the late 1960s, production was halted, ostensibly due to depletion of the forests used to supply the wood. I suspect Syria's political difficulties and warring with Israel did little to facilitate tobacco growing, processing and exportation. Production switched quickly to the Republic of Cyprus, an ancient and beautiful Mediterranean island that was no stranger to tobacco growing. Cyprus also grew its own supply of leaf. Farmers cure the tobacco using native woods, which gives Cyprian Latakia a different flavor and character from Syrian. Owing to the strong influences that soil and climate have on tobacco, the leaf grown in Cyprus is also different from Syrian-grown leaf.

What's the taste difference between Syrian and Cyprian Latakia? Both have very low nicotine content. Despite being very rich-tasting, both smoke cool with no tongue bite. Chemical analysis shows that today's Cyprian has nearly three times the sugar content of Syrian. To most palates, Syrian Latakia is more delicate-tasting and has a distinctive fruity, fig-like aromatic component that probably comes from the use of native pine and hardwood and the possible addition of

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esoteric herbs or aromatic shrubs in the curing fires. The exact composition of the woods used for curing both Cyprian and Syrian leaf has always been a tightly guarded secret. Both types are excellent but decidedly different in character. We're fortunate to now have access to blends that incorporate both types of this smooth, rich tobacco. More detailed information on Latakia and other tobaccos can be found in Carl Ehwa Jr.'s *The Book of Pipes & Tobacco* and Milton Sherman's *All About Tobacco*. Both are out of print but should be available through noted historian and *P&T* contributor Benjamin Rapaport (703.435.8133 or *benrapaport@earthlink.net*).

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McClelland Syrians

Rose of Latakia

Serad: Predominantly a medium-cut, medium reddish brown mixture with dashes of black, this is drier than most McClelland blends upon opening the tin. The aroma is atypical, too, lacking that McClelland tang, and definitely imbued with Syrian Latakia and its woodsy note. At the match, billows of smoke issue forth, even from a small pipe. The initial taste is surprisingly unprepossessing, but this impression firing up does not maintain itself. The flavor stays the same in type, but like a rose, it blossoms, becoming more and more developed down the bowl. The more I puffed, the better it got. I think that among the politically correct, the room note won't win you fans, but you'll like it as it unfolds. It goes best in a large bowl, in my opinion; and do wait for the flavors to develop before passing judgment. It exhibits notable delicacy, and is recommended for the patient palate.

Gage: Of McClelland's four Syrian Latakia blends, Rose of Latakia is the most delicate. Oriental and stoved Virginia leaf predominate, while the Latakia serves a role as a delicate condiment. Upon opening the tin, you're greeted with a sweet, fruity nose. I had fun dissecting this tobacco and trying to figure out the Oriental leaf included in this mixture, which features ribbon-cut and square-cut (a little chunkier) tobaccos. I could discern two or three distinctive types of Oriental leaf, rather than a generic blend of Turkish or Oriental tobaccos. Kudos to McClelland and whomever it works with to ferret out these rare leaves in enough quantity to make a meaningful difference.

Rose of Latakia has a unique flavor that walks the line between a stoved Virginia mixture and a traditional Turkish-type blend. It reminds me a bit of a long-gone and somewhat obscure tobacco from GBD called Aromatique, which featured similar components: Oriental Xanthi leaf, Syrian Latakia and lots of matured Virginia. Given the very light touch of smoky, fruity Syrian Latakia, this mixture should appeal to smokers who don't often venture into the Latakia Zone. It's also an interesting diversion for those who love Balkan mixtures and even those who like intense Latakia blends—as long as they have a tolerance for Virginia tobaccos.

• • •

Frog Morton Across the Pond

Serad: Possessing a tin aroma familiar to those conversant with the Frog Morton series, this is the most delicate and nuanced of them all. Mixed colors from brown to russet and jet-black, it differs in a slight tilt toward the Orientals and the woody character of the Syrian leaf. At the match, Syrian is obvious, and the smoke is as cool as all Frogs and as unchanging down the bowl. This is not to say it's without complexity, for with each puff, there exists a microcosm of intricate flavors with constantly changing interplay. Nothing overwhelms, and this tapestry in tobacco leaf continues throughout without ever landing, like a hummingbird darting rapidly from flower to flower. A sophisticated blend for the appreciative palate; highly recommended.

Gage: The Frog Morton series has become a staple for lovers of hearty Latakia-rich mixtures. Like a "big" Bordeaux or Cabernet, the Frog Morton series is (if one can describe a pipe tobacco as such) huge and chewy. Across the Pond replaces McClelland's usual Cyprian Latakia with Syrian leaf. Like the other Frog Morton blends, Latakia steers the flavor boat, but in a different direction from the others. Right from the tin, the aroma hints at a blend that's perhaps a bit subtler than the Cyprian-based Frogs. Ribbon-cut stoved Virginias, Oriental leaf, Syrian Latakia and Perique, ranging in color from gold to red to pitch-black, beg you to fill a bowl and light up. The mixture lights quickly and settles into a smooth and even burn. The Syrian leaf gives this Frog a lighter character than the other Frog Morton blends. It's well-balanced and elegant.

• • •

Syrian Full Balkan

Serad: Unique among Balkans, this is an all-day blend that does not fatigue the palate. Each bowl starts off seeming to be a heavy English, but the defining Balkan tang asserts itself, although not with the charming Yenidje bitterness of the original Balkan Sobranie. The tin aroma betrays the significant Oriental component before the light, but one doesn't get a notion of the interplay and complexity a match reveals. Down the bowl an almost aristocratic array of classic Balkan tastes are revealed, never flagging to the dottle. Not a bit of stridency, just balanced flavor and that unique taste from the Syrian. Do I detect some Greek leaf? Perhaps, but Syrian Full Balkan is an answer to those searching for a true Balkan that sustains the senses of the palate rather than flattening them. Recommended to English fans, highly recommended to the Balkanites.

Gage: This is a visually appealing blend featuring Syrian leaf, Orientals, Virginia and a hint of Perique. It packed and lit well, and smoked evenly to the end. I

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detected something like bright flue-cured Virginia in addition to the stoved Virginia. It had a lighter top note not typically associated with Balkan blends. However, this mixture straddled the fence a little too much for my liking. Although tasty and well-made, it wasn't quite a light Balkan blend, nor was it rich enough to be a devastatingly heavy English blend.

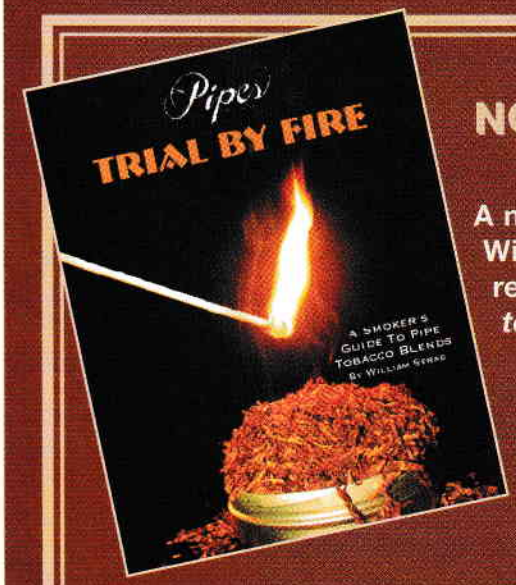
• • •

Syrian Super Balkan

Serad: I'll start off with the lavish praise: This is probably the most elegantly refined yet richly flavorful Balkan I have ever tried. In fact, I am wrestling with the notion that it is not a Balkan at all, since I detect no buzzy bitterness of the classic Balkan. I will leave it up to the reader, but regardless of the classification, it is full of refined and balanced Orientals polished with Perique, giving it a unique and tastefully rounded finish. Wonderfully deep, and not just pounded with condimental leaf, this is clearly graced with superior Virginias of the deeper sorts holding it all together. A Balkan of the greatest élan and unique style, a definite must-try for both English and Balkan seekers, and highly recommended.

Gage: On opening the tin, the name alone prepares you to be decapitated by a powerful surge of Latakia, but the opposite is true. The aroma certainly bespeaks loads of Latakia, but the delicate Syrian leaf combined with judicious amounts of stoved Virginia and Orientals creates a sweet, rich scent. The mixture is very black—darker than the other three in the Syrian series, with minimal amounts of lighter-colored leaf. The Perique, stoved Virginia and Latakia were easy to spot, as were the silky brown and red flecks of specific Oriental leaf. I'm thinking Xanthi and Yenidje, maybe Djubek (all leaves with distinctly different flavors). I just could not tell for sure. The stoved Virginia sweetens and unifies the blend, but stays appropriately in the background. The smoky Syrian leaf and varietal Turkish tobaccos took center stage. The Perique wasn't noticeable, yet the blend would be distinctly less if it was absent.

The skillful blending and presence of Syrian Latakia captures the essence of classic English blends that disappeared in the 1960s along with the discontinuation of Syrian Latakia production. It's a taste I've experienced by sampling vintage tobaccos and never thought I'd experience again in a newly produced blend. Feel free to cellar a batch. Based on my experience, even the relatively modest amount of Virginia tobaccos will cause the blend to sweeten slightly and become more complex with age. *P&T*



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ASK CHUCK

Two letters in response to last issue's column

I just read your answer to the reader who has trouble with pot-shaped pipes, and I thought your answer was interesting, though I'm reluctant to try it because I prefer an even line of tobacco no matter what. Maybe I'm too old-school. However, since the pot shape is one of my favorites, and I never have the problems that you and the reader discussed, I thought I'd pass along what I do:

I agree with you that it is all in the tamping, and I use a special tamper for my pot-shaped bowls. The tamper is nothing more than an ordinary tamper with a coin (dime, penny, or foreign currency—it just occurred to me this might be against the law!)—glued to the rounded part of the tamper. In other words, I use a tamper that is three-quarters of an inch in diameter as opposed to the usual tampers that are less than half an inch in diameter. With such a large-headed tamper, it is easy to get a smooth, even tamp, starting either at the center of the bowl and then working to the sides, tamping along the edges, or starting at the edges and then ending up tamping the center—just so the line of tobacco is even. This really works for me. If you decide to try it, please let me know how it works. It has a totally different effect than if you use a standard tamper—which I agree with you and the reader does not work well at all for pot-shaped bowls.

In the event coins are illegal, I'm sure you could substitute metal poker chips or any kind of round metal chip that is similar to a coin. Tony Rodriguez uses metal door stoppers that he buys at Home Depot—the ones with a large-diameter metal circle at the end.

The best pipe is the one that is barely smoldering, and it is easy to keep a pot-shaped pipe barely smoldering because the wide diameter of the tobacco chamber, with the tobacco evenly tamped, will help the tobacco to stay barely lit. The tamping should be light—don't press down too hard, and feel free to gently blow through the mouthpiece to keep the pipe barely smoldering. The two big mistakes people make with pot-shaped pipes are to smoke too fast and to tamp the tobacco too firmly. Both mistakes will cause the bottom of the bowl to get too hot.

Rick Newcombe
Los Angeles, California

I continue to be pleasantly surprised by the literary standards upheld by the editors of P&T. ***I frequently wince upon reading other publications, which often contain poorly expressed ideas. Yours, however, is the bomb! (That's a good thing I'm told.)***

Writing the "Ask Chuck" column takes a certain degree of fearlessness due to the varied and strongly held opinions of many in the pipe smoking field. As the popular Harley-Davidson motorcycle jacket patch "Put it in the Wind" aptly expresses, letting it all hang out feels good but can be dangerous.

Reading your response in the Fall 2004 issue to Mr. McElvoy about the uneven burn of pot-shaped pipes brought a thought to mind. He also reported difficulty in keeping these pipes lit. I believe this is due to the larger diameter of the tobacco chamber common to pot shapes. Because of this, the draw is weakened and less air is pulled through the load to stoke the fire. My way of dealing with this is to pack pot-shaped pipes more firmly than others.

About a year ago, I recommended the "tilted tamp" technique in the Pipe Smokers Ephemeris ***for full bents in which the air hole enters the tobacco chamber relatively high above the heel. Now, I have learned another application of this method.***

Mark Beale, MD

Thank you for your insights, gentlemen. So far, I still like my own technique better (imagine that) but I promise to keep practicing both of your strategies, and hope that our readers will experiment and report on their own experiences.

—Chuck

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Mary Cornwall, Circulation Director

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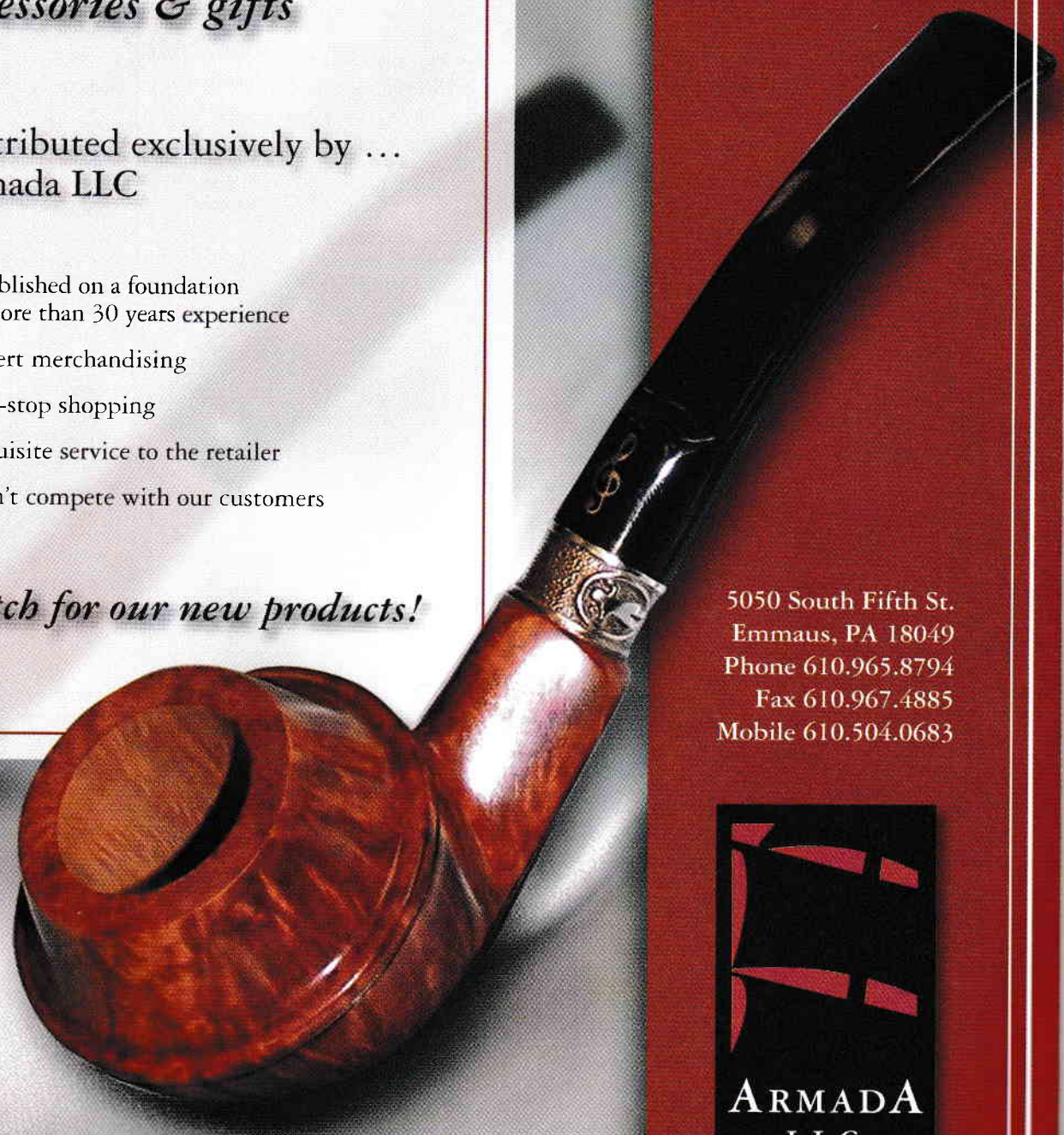

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PIPE EVENTS

Chicagoland International Pipe & Tobacciana Show
The Chicagoland International Pipe & Tobacciana Show will be held May 14-15, 2005, at the Pheasant Run Resort, 4051 East Main Street, St. Charles, IL 60174. Reservation telephone numbers are 800.999.3319 or 630.584.6300. Mention the show and receive a special room rate. For more information, contact Mike Reschke at 630.889.0453; e-mail: *mwreschke@ameritech.net*; or Frank Burla at 630.271.1317; e-mail: *fpburla@aol.com*; or visit the show's Web site at *www.chicagopipeshow.com*.

Fort Wayne Pipe and Tobacciana Show
The Tri-State Pipe and Tobacco Club will host its fifth annual Fort Wayne Pipe and Tobacciana Show on Saturday, April 9, 2005, at the Quality Hotel Ballroom, 3330 W. Coliseum Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46808. A special show room rate of $69 is available by calling the Quality Hotel at 260.482.7711. For show information and table reservations, contact Larry Rathburn at 14515 Winters Rd., Roanoke, IN 46782; phone 260.672.8802; e-mail: *rathpipe@aol.com*; or check out the club's Web site at *www.tsptc.org*.

St. Louis Pipe Show
The St. Louis Pipe Club presents the 17th annual Gateway Area Pipe Show & Swap on Feb. 19, 2005, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Hilton St. Louis Airport, 10330 Natural Bridge Rd., St. Louis, MO 63134. Contact the hotel at 800.345.5500 and mention the show for the special room rate of $79. For more information, contact Jay Milton, 56 Glen Echo, Glen Carbon, IL 62034; 618.288.2090; or Bob Callaway at 220 Pralle Lane, St. Charles, MO 63303; 636.946.8555.

West Coast Pipe and Cigar Expo
The West Coast Pipe and Cigar Expo will be held on April 16-17, 2005, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Ureta Grand, 1345 N. Vermont Ave., Hollywood, California. For more information, send an e-mail to *expo@wcpcl.org* or contact Robert Vance at 626.396.9827.

To add your club or event listing, please send your information, including club or event name, meeting place and time, and contact information, to Clubs and Events, *Pipes and tobaccos* magazine, 5808 Faringdon Place, Suite 200, Raleigh, NC 27609; or e-mail *sross@speccomm.com*.

PIPE CLUBS

Arrowhead Pipe Club
Contact Dan Spaniola, Arrowhead Pipe Club, c/o Paul's Pipe Shop, 647 South Saginaw St., Flint, MI 48502.

Atlanta Pipe Club
Second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at Royal Cigar Co., 2179 Briarcliff Road, Atlanta, Georgia, on the corner of Briarcliff and LaVista Rd. Contact Joyce White at 404.329.0088, or Michael Shawn Stanton at *latakia@fineprintstudio.com*.

Briars Club
Hawthorne, New Jersey's Briars Club meets on the second Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. Location is subject to change. For meeting or club information, contact Howard Gutenstein at 845.433.3598; *briarsclub2001@yahoo.com*.

Briars Club of Rome
Meets every Wednesday. All members receive 25 percent off all pipe accessories and tobaccos at Old Havana Cigar Co. in Rome, Georgia. For information, contact Steven McDowell Jr. at 706.295.0546 or *oldhavana@bellsouth.net*.

Briar Squires Pipe Club
Second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at Hops Grill and Bar, 9826 San Jose Blvd., Jacksonville, Florida. Annual pipe-smoking contests are held on the Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day. Contact Briar Squires, P.O. Box 61446, Jacksonville, FL 32236; Cy Jones at 904.739.8190; or Clif Byrd at *crbyrd@bellsouth.net*.

Burlington Pipe Club
First Thursday of the month at The Black Bull, 1124 Guelph Line, Burlington, Ontario. Contact Phil Raney at 519.754.1148.

Capital Area Pipe Smokers (CAPS)
Third Wednesday of every other month in the Washington, D.C., area. Contact Randy Evans, *raevans@outdrs.net*; Brian Siravo, *CAPSpipeshow@aol.com*; or *Caps_pipe.tripod.com*.

Central Florida Pipe Club
Last Thursday of the month at The Tobacco Merchant in Jacobsen's Plaza in Longwood, Florida, from 6 to 9 p.m. Contact Don Hockman Jr. at 407.647.3200; *orlandopipe@yahoo.com*.

Central Oklahoma Pipe Enthusiasts (COPE)
Second Thursday of the month at the Royal Bavaria Brauhaus & Restaurant, 3401 S. Sooner Road, Moore, Oklahoma. Contact COPE, P.O. Box 7034, Moore, OK 73153; or *jhaldeman@bix.com*.

Chesapeake Pipe Club
Second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Johnny Dee's Lounge, 1705 Amuskai Rd., Baltimore, MD 21234. Call Bill Maitz, 410.825.8940.

Chicagoland Pipe Collectors Club (CPCC)
The CPCC meets every month on a Saturday night, except in May, July and December, at the Secret Garden Restaurant, 1612 Rand Road, Arlington Heights, IL, 847.670.5502. Dates and times may be found at *www.chicagopipeshow.com*, or contact Mike Reschke at 630.889.0453 or *mwreschke@ameritech.net*.

Christopher Morley Pipe Club of Philadelphia
Third Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at Engine 46 Steak House, 10 Reed St., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Contact Bob Page at 215.732.7235; 215.567.2972; or *rpage@classicalguitarstore.com*.

Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers (CORPS)
Meets the third Tuesday of the month at various Richmond, Virginia-area restaurants and pubs. Contact CORPS for the location of the next meeting at 804.342.0761; e-mail: *conclave@corpipesmokers.org*; Web site: *www.corpipesmokers.org*.

Confrere of Indiana Briar Friars
Contact Stephen Williams at 765.282.0229.

CT Area Pipe Society (CTAPS)
New club seeking members. Contact Rick Olszewski at CT Area Pipe Society, 84 D'Amato Lane, Bristol, CT 06010; phone: 860.983.3018; Web site: *http://www.ctaps.org*; or e-mail: *membership@ctaps.org*.

Croft's Burley Burners
First Saturday of the month at Croft's Pipe & Tobacco Shop, 4722 Richmond Ave., Houston, TX 77027. Call 713.850.8091 for more information.

Dallas/Fort Worth Pipe Smokers Club
Third Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at various locations in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. For more information, contact Ed Price at *epr065@airmail.net*, or visit the club's Web site at *www.web2.airmail.net/epr065/dfwpipe*, or its chat room at *www.groups.yahoo.com/group/DFWPipesmokers*.

Fresno Pipe Club
Third Sunday of the month at 6 p.m. at Hardwick's Briar Shoppe. Contact Douglas A. Pitts at Hardwick's Briar Shoppe, Manchester Center, 3402 N. Blackstone, Suite 124, Fresno, CA 93726; 209.228.1389; *dpitts@gte.net*.

Great Northern Pipe Club
Third Sunday of the month at 1:30 p.m., usually at the Maplewood Lanes, Lower Level, 1955 English Street, Maplewood, Minnesota. Contact Tony Espeseth at 715.595.4666 or check out the club's Web site at *www.greatnorthernpipeclub.org*.

Greater Columbus Pipe and Ale (GCPA)
The GCPA is a new pipe club in the Columbus, Ohio, area. For information about meetings, contact the GCPA at 168 Boyd Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43085; e-mail: *GCPAinfo@lycos.com*.

Greater Kansas City Pipe Club
Third Thursday of the month at Cigar & Tabac, 103 Metcalf Center in Overland Park, Kansas, at 8 p.m. The club also hosts an annual pipe show in the fall. Call Mike Sull at 913.362.7864 or e-mail the club at *www.GKCPipeClub.com*.

Hudson Valley Pipe Club
First Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. at various locations in the Hudson Valley. Hosting the annual Hudson Valley Pipe Smoking Championship in December. Contact Rob Denholtz at 845.462.2495; *den@ulster.net*.

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Kentuckiana Pipe Smokers' Club
Second Sunday of the month. Contact Samantha Hubert, 1612 Hickory Grove Road, Lawrenceburg, KY 40342; 502.839.3229; or *iapsc.net/html/kps1.html.*

Knoxville Area Pipe Smokers (KAPS)
Third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Contact *www.knoxareapipesmokers.org*; or Randy Pedigo at 865.637.7565 or *repedigo@bellsouth.net.*

Memphis Area Puffers Society MAPS
Third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m., upstairs at the Sports Pub, 5012 Park Ave (Park & Mendanhall), Memphis, Tennessee. Contact Bob at *info@pipe club.org*; Web site: *www.pipeclub.org.*

Milwaukee Area Pipe Society
The Milwaukee Area Pipe Society meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at Jack's Tobacco and M.C.S., 13640 W. Capitol Drive, Brookfield, Wisconsin. For information, e-mail *info@milwaukeeareapipesociety.com*, or visit the Web site at *www.milwaukeeareapipesociety.com.*

Mt. Town Society of Kapnismologists
Mt. Town Society of Kapnismologists meets the first and third Thursday of every month at 8 p.m. at Smokers Club, 100 S. Mission St., Ste. C, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858. For information, contact Dave at 989.775.8536 or *mandogart@hotmail.com.*

Nashville Area Pipe Smokers (NAPS)
Second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Sherlock Holmes Pub located at 2206 Elliston Place, Nashville, Tennessee. Contact Chuck Horvath at 615.790.9582; *chuck.horvath@us.army.mil.*

New York Pipe Club
First and third Tuesdays of the month. For times and locations, visit the club's Web site at *www.newyork pipeclub.com.*

Nordic Smokers' Guild
Contact President Leif Slot, Florsgade 7, 3 th, DK-2200 Copenhagen N, Denmark; *ls@n-t.dk.*

North Georgia Pipe Club
Third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at Smitty's Tobacco, 975 Dawsonville Hwy., Gainesville, Georgia. Contact Clark Smith at 770.539.9006; *wcsmith1@bellsouth.net.*

North Oakland Tobacco and Pipe Club (NOTPC)
First Thursday of the month at 7 p.m., at The Commonwealth Club, 30088 Dequindre Road, Warren, MI 48092. Contact Terry McGinty at 248.471.0195; *tmcginty@ameritech.net.*

Northeast Arkansas Pipe Puffers
The Pipe Puffers meet on the second Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. and the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Tobacco Plus Store in the Midway Plaza in Highland, Arkansas. Contact Dick Alexander, c/o Tobacco Plus-Midway Plaza, 1998 Highway 62/412, Hardy, AR 72542; 870.856.4100 or 870.856.4433.

Northeast Wisconsin Tobacco Society (NEWTS)
Third Monday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Titletown Brewing Co. Contact Todd R. Jerabek at *tjerabek@frontiernet.net.*

Old Pueblo Pipe Club
Third Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at local shops. For more information, check the schedule on the club Web site, *www.jack-tompkins.com/OPPC*, or contact Jack Tompkins at 520.459.4317; e-mail: *Tompkins_jl@cox.net.*

Ottawa Pipe Club
Pipe club in Canada's capital meets once a month from May to October with varying days and locations. Visit the club's Web site at *www.mindless.ca/pipes/ottawapipe.html* for details or contact Eric Mathurin at 613.820.2698.

Pipe Club de France
Contact President Alain Letulier, 38 rue du Chevalier de la Barre, F59175 Templemars, France; *alainletulier@compuserve.com.*

Pipe Club of Norfolk (U.K.)
The Pipe Club of Norfolk (U.K.) meets at the Rosary Tavern, Rosary Road, Thorpe Hamlet, Norwich, on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. For more information, visit the Web site at *http://www.pipeclubofnorfolk.co.uk.*

Pipe Club of Taiwan
Contact Ben Chen, P.O. Box 83-53, Taipei 111, Taiwan; *hanworld@ms29.hinet.net.*

Pocono Inter-Mountain Pipe Enclave (PIPE)
Every Tuesday night at El Humidor in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, from 6 to 9 p.m. Contact David Bull at 570.894.8016 or *debull@starband.net.*

Sacramento Pipe Collector's Assembly (SPCA)
Twice monthly on the third Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. and last Sunday of the month at 1 p.m. in downtown Sacramento, California, at 1325 O Street #1. Contact Gary Malmberg, 916.442.6027; e-mail: *gmalmberg@earthlinknet.*

Sandwich Isle Pipe Society
Last Wednesday of the month from 6 to 9 p.m. at South Pacific Pipes & Cigars, 350 Ward Ave., Suite 106, Honolulu, HI 96814. Contact Dale James Neff at 808.591.8275.

Seattle Pipe Club
Second Wednesday of the month from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Tinder Box 10150 Main St., Bellevue, WA 98004; phone: 425.451.8544. Some meetings are held off-site. Contact Ron Butler, *crenterprise@unidial.com*, 253.927.3672; Matt Guss, *matt@reallysmart.com*, 206.903.6542; *www.seattlepipeclub.org.*

Shanghai Pipe Club
Meets every other Saturday afternoon from 2 to 6 p.m. at 498-43 North Wulumuqi Road, Shanghai. Check out the club's Web site at www.shanghai pipeclub.com or contact Echo Hui at *echo_hui@yahoo.com* for more information.

Sherlock Holmes Pipe Club of Boston
Second Wednesday of the month at the Holiday Inn, Mansfield, Massachusetts. Contact Nelson Pidgeon at *birdseye@adelphia.net*; or Don Powers, 781.449.0380.

Singapore Pipe Club
Meets every Sunday morning at 10 a.m. whenever Dr. Mike Loh is in town, at Starbucks, Liat Towers, Orchard Road. For more information, contact Dr. Loh at *mikeloh-ecommerce2004@mailblocks.com.*

South Hampton Roads Pipesmokers' Club
First Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at the White Horse Pub in Pembroke Mall, Virginia Beach, Virginia. Contact Dan Carey at 757.236.3469; e-mail: *e-celt@yahoo.com.*

South Jersey Pipe and Cigar Club
Second Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at Your Coffee and Cigar Box, 703 Tilton Road, Northfield, NJ 08225. Call 609.645.3345.

St. Louis Pipe Club
Second Saturday of the month at 9 a.m. at John Dengler Tobacconist, 700 S. Main, St. Charles, Missouri, and the fourth Saturday of the month at 7 p.m. at Town & Country Tobacco, 13933 Manchester Rd., St. Louis, Missouri. Contact Jay Milton at 618.288.2090, or Bob Calloway at 636.946.8555.

Toronto Pipe Club
Second Saturday of the month at 1 p.m. Contact Douglas Cope at 905.791.1440 or *www.torpipeclub.ca.*

Triangle Area Pipe Smokers
Second Tuesday of each month at Duffy's Restaurant & Tavern, 8021 Falls of Neuse Road, Raleigh, North Carolina. Meetings start at 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact Jim Carrino at 919.848.0685, Stan Sokolove at *pipechief@msn.com*, or visit the Web site at *www.ncneighbors.com/1416.*

Tri-State Pipe and Tobacco Club
For information about meetings of the Fort Wayne, Indiana-based club, contact Dennis Nichols at 260.744.4797.

United Pipe Clubs of America
An organization representing U.S. pipe clubs for national and international smoking competitions and sharing the pipe-smoking experience around the world. For more information, visit the Web site at *www.unitedpipeclubs.org* or e-mail the organization at *pipes@unitedpipeclubs.org.*

Waco Pipe Club
Last Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Texas Sports Hall of Fame Museum, 1108 S. University Parks Drive in Waco, Texas. Contact Steve Fallon at 254.754.3258.

Washington Area Pipe Smokers
Third Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at The Smoke Shop, 940 W. Chestnut Street, Washington, Pennsylvania. Contact Paula J. Fenelon at The Smoke Shop, 724.228.3266.

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